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THE ROMANCE OF SAVOY

VOL. I







*Victor Amadeus II. King of Sicily & Sardinia.*  
*From a picture in the Palazzo Margherita, Rome.*  
*By permission of H. M. Queen Margherita.*





THE  
ROMANCE OF SAVOY

VICTOR AMADEUS II. AND  
HIS STUART BRIDE

BY  
THE MARCHESA VITELLESCHI

WITH TWENTY-SIX FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS  
INCLUDING TWO PHOTOGRAVURE PLATES

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I

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## PREFACE

THE connection between the Courts of Great Britain and Savoy, and the mutual interests binding the royal houses of these countries, supply a large fund of historical incidents, the political importance of which culminated under the reign of Victor Amadeus II. and Anna d'Orléans.

The persistent attempts of Louis XIV. to keep Savoy in his iron hand, and the tenacity of purpose by which Victor Amadeus overcame his manifold adversities, of not small importance for the political equilibrium of Europe, form a most attractive theme, and suggested to the Author to attempt to meet the approbation of the reading public on this subject.

In entering into this work the Author has met with much assistance from several sources. She would first, with all due respect, wish to mention Her Majesty, Queen Margherita of Savoy. Besides the gracious encouragement received from the illustrious Sovereign, Her Majesty extended her courtesy to offering the Author reproductions from her private collection of portraits of the Princes of Savoy. A

similar privilege was conferred on the Author by His Majesty the King of Italy, by whose gracious permission the charming portrait of the Duchesse de Bourgogne in the Quirinal Palace is here reproduced. For these royal favours the Author desires to express her most warm and respectful gratitude. These portraits have added considerably to the interest of the book, and in her endeavour to produce a picture of Court life at Turin in the seventeenth and early part of the eighteenth century, will greatly conduce to help the success of a study on a period of history but little known to England.

The Author further wishes to take this opportunity of expressing her thanks to the Principe di Scalea, who furnished her with notes and appropriate reproductions relating to the short residence of Victor Amadeus in Sicily, to the Barone Antonio Manno, by whose efforts the strict rules of the "clausura papale" of the Monastery at Pinerolo were infringed, and for the first time access was granted to reproduce the portrait of the Marchesa di Spigno, the King's second wife, whose life terminated tragically in those precincts, and to the Conte Balbo Bertone, who afforded the Author information on the Contessa di Verrua.

In addition to those friends who, absent or present, have offered the Author a helping hand, she would wish to pay a tribute of respect to the memory of Monsignore Lanza, Court Chaplain to the King of

Italy, whose death has occurred during the progress of this work. The courtesy of this prelate afforded the Author an opportunity of knowing one well versed in the history of that House to which he was deeply attached. It was also due to Monsignore Lanza that she obtained permission from Roux e Viarengo, publishers, to reproduce the curious engraving representing the Duke and Duchess of Savoy in adoration before the Holy Shroud.

These sentiments of gratitude are extended to the Master of Peterhouse, for his assistance in historical investigations, and to the Directors of the State Archives of Turin, of the Ministère des Affaires Etrangères in Paris, of the Archives at Chambéry, and of the Record Office in London.

## L'ENVOI

A pretty tradition relates that when Edmund, Earl of Lancaster, wooed and won the beautiful Blanche of Navarre, the widowed Queen of Henri V., he brought from Provence the roses planted there by the Crusaders, and thus instituted the badge of his House. The rose is also the ancient and traditional flower of the House of Savoy, established, it is said, in the year 1463 by the Queen of Cyprus, wife of Duke Ludovico of Savoy. The roses that bloom under the grey sky of the north, and those that luxuriate in the balmy clime of Italy, form a nosegay of blending perfumes that, side by side with the great interests that have led to the unity of the royal Houses of Great Britain and Savoy, is a poetic emblem of the reigning concord and the harmony of associations by which the two countries are bound.

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# THE ROMANCE OF SAVOY

## CHAPTER I

### HENRIETTA, DUCHESS OF ORLEANS

The association of the Houses of Stuart and Savoy—Charles I. and Henrietta Maria—Birth of the future Duchess of Orleans—Escape of the Queen to France—The young Princess confided to the care of Lady Morton—The child is conveyed in safety to her mother—Her education at Chaillot—Her presentation at Court in 1654—The coronation of Louis XIV.—The difference of character between the King and his brother—Anne of Austria chooses Princess Henrietta Anne for Monsieur's bride—Description of the Princess—The Queen and Princess return to England—Their reception by Charles II.—Marriage dowry voted—Impatience of Monsieur on his bride's return—Violent storm at sea—The attentions of the Duke of Buckingham—Death of Mazarin—The royal marriage—Louis XIV. pays attentions to his sister-in-law—The suspicions of Monsieur are roused—The Comte de Guiche—Domestic troubles arise—Madame's political influence—Louise de la Vallière—Birth of the future Duchess of Savoy in 1669—Madame's unhappy life with Monsieur—The christening of the Princess—Triumphal progress to Flanders—Mademoiselle de Montpensier relates the experience of the expedition—Monsieur continues to torment his wife—Madame leaves for England on a political mission—The treaty of Dover—The gratitude of Louis XIV. on Madame's assistance—Her sudden illness—Rumours of poison—Scenes by her death-bed—The indifference of Monsieur—The indignation of Charles II.—Bossuet's oration.

THE numerous works published of late years on the last Princes of the House of Stuart tend to confirm belief that the public interest is unabated as to all that concerns a subject of such unfailing fascination. Doubtless a halo of romance radiates

round certain sentimental episodes in the chequered careers of the Chevalier de St. Georges and his two sons, and this period will always live as one of unusual interest. Seeing how absorbing is the perusal of their blighted hopes, a desire may possibly arise to increase acquaintanceship with other members of the royal family of Stuart, who, if less known to fame, may lay equal claim to attention. This work is therefore presented to the public with the view of bringing into notice another personality who by her marriage formed a link between the House of Stuart and that of Savoy.

This is a matter of the greater interest, in view of the fact that the long-standing sympathy evinced for the House of Savoy by the Stuart kings, and the correspondence between the two Courts, show that they were always on terms of disinterested friendship.

To no country more than to England must the reminiscences of the Princes of Savoy naturally appeal. The sentiment of cordiality that unites the two countries in the present day has matured with the growth of time, and the goodwill existing between the two kingdoms has been of unbroken continuation.

The Princess, whose history is recorded in this work as one of the many factors in the promotion of mutual sympathy, was Anna Maria, one of the least known of the Stuart Princesses. Unassuming and simple though she was, her life appears worthy of

interest owing to the circumstances under which her marriage took place and the consequences which followed it.

Princess Anna, to whom attention is now drawn, was granddaughter of Charles I. and wife of Victor Amadeus II., Duke of Savoy.

The life of Victor Amadeus himself may be considered of importance, not only through the union of two royal houses, but on account of his own successful career during a most interesting period of history.

In order that the relation of the future Duchess of Savoy to this record may be presented in a lucid manner, it may not be amiss to go back a few years and summarise as briefly as may be the principal events in which her mother, Henrietta d'Orléans, played a part during her few years of brilliant success at the Court of France.

As is well known, the House of Stuart had frequently claimed the protection of France, and had received hospitality from the French Court which, when it coincided with the interests of France, was ever a powerful and reliable assistance to the exiled Princes and Princesses in moments of need.

This hospitality so ungrudgingly held out by France led to many marriages and intermarriages between the reigning Houses of both countries, and the marriage of Henrietta Maria, daughter of Henri IV. and Marie de Medici, with Charles I. in 1625, had paved the way for closer recognition of kinship by Louis XIV. This connection was further

cemented by the marriage of Henrietta Maria's daughter with Philippe, Duc d'Orléans—the brother of Louis XIV. and founder of the branch of the Bourbon-Orléans family. The Duke died in 1701, but his beautiful wife, who, during the few years allotted her, subjugated everyone by her charms, had predeceased him under circumstances that reflected gravely against Philippe d'Orléans.

Princess Henrietta's birth on June 16th, 1644, had been ushered in with omens of evil augury. In the place of a *feu de joie*, the ominous boom of the enemy's cannon with sinister persistency approached ever nearer to the loyal town of Exeter, where Queen Henrietta Maria had taken refuge and had placed herself under the protection of Sir John Berkeley, one of the truest of the King's servants. Midst the turmoil and confusion unavoidably attendant on preparations for a siege the Queen slowly recovered from her recent confinement; and as the report gained ground that Cromwell's army was within a few days' march of the town, the Queen, after taking into consideration that should she fall into the hands of the rebels it would seriously increase the dangers of the King's position, adopted the grave decision to abandon both the King and England. Henrietta Maria was well aware that she had failed in obtaining any hold on the affection of the people. Devoted wife though she had been to the King, undoubtedly she had greatly contributed to his unpopularity, and in this moment of sore perplexity she could not blind

herself to the fact that she occupied a large share in the nation's resentment against their Sovereign.

Having determined on the most advisable course to pursue, she confided the child, who was too young to travel, to the care of Lady Morton, one of her ladies-in-waiting, and after writing a heart-breaking letter to Charles, though she was still weak and utterly unfit for a perilous voyage, she contrived, with the help of friends and in disguise, to embark at Plymouth and effected an escape to France.

Barely ten days elapsed between the Queen's departure and the entry of the King into Exeter, who, having repulsed Lord Essex, by forced marches had succeeded in entering the town. Here he expected to meet the Queen, and his grief at not finding her still there was all the more profound as he felt Fate held him in her cruel grasp. He was unable to restrain his deep emotion as he took the child in his arms, and for the first and last time pressed her to his heart with all the fervour of a soul in deepest distress ; he then hurriedly turned to his chaplain and expressed his desire that she should be baptised according to the rites of the Anglican Church. After making, under difficult circumstances, the best possible arrangements for his child's welfare, he hastily left the town, and without loss of time joined his troops, who were in pursuit of Cromwell's army.

Within a few days of the Queen's flight and the hurried visit of the King, Sir John Berkeley found

himself bound to capitulate, and, though the Act of Parliament had expressly stipulated that the baby Princess was to be permitted to reside in any town that Lady Morton should consider the most advisable for her, no sooner had Exeter capitulated than this Act was no longer respected, and the Princess was sent to Oatlands, near Weybridge, under the strict supervision of the Government.

This breach of faith on the part of the Ministers convinced Lady Morton that, in order to merit the confidence placed in her judgment, she must act on her own responsibility, and she forthwith occupied herself as to the best means of evading her enforced imprisonment. Lady Morton was too intelligent a woman not to foresee that the darkest hours of the Revolution were still to come, so with heroic self-sacrifice, in the face of grave obstacles and dangers, she made the necessary arrangements to convey the child in safety to France.<sup>1</sup>

In spite of all the difficulties that stood in the way of her decision, Lady Morton, through her admirable courage and presence of mind, was enabled to reach Paris in safety in July, 1646, and transferred to Henrietta Maria the precious charge that had been confided to her care.

The Queen, in the joy of seeing her child again, called her “*l'enfant de bénédiction*,” and pronounced her conviction that this blessing had been granted her

<sup>1</sup> *Henriette Anne d'Angleterre*, p. 12, de Baillon. Perrin, Paris, 1886.

solely owing to the resolution she had taken of bringing up the child in the Roman Catholic religion.

Such a declaration on the part of the Queen at a moment of intense importance, when the life of her husband was in the hands of those who had made religion the basis of their rebellious proceedings, throws a light on the causes of the general upheaval. The pronounced sentiments of the Stuart Sovereigns running counter to the religious feelings of the nation was the foundation of all the ills which befell their race, and Henrietta Maria was as incapable as those who succeeded her of taking a broader view of such a momentous question.

The final *coup* by which all sentiments of humanity were violated took place the 30th of January, 1649. The tragedy that made the Queen a widow and the children fatherless was the consummation of all the previous iniquitous actions of the regicides. Overwhelmed with grief and distress, Henrietta Maria entered into the Convent of Les Dames de Ste. Marie, at Chaillot, and much as Mazarin was averse to any protection being offered to the widowed Queen, a policy which was mainly due to an understanding with Cromwell, to whom he had given promises of assistance, the Queen Mother, Anne of Austria, held out a hand of sympathy to the Queen of England.

The Prince of Wales, now Charles II., who had been staying with his sister, the Princess of Orange, in Holland, joined his mother in France, and his

arrival was soon followed by that of his brother James, Duke of York, who, not without many difficulties and dangers, had escaped from England. The Duke of Gloucester and Princess Elizabeth were still kept there as prisoners.

The Queen led a retired life of peace and seclusion in the newly founded Convent of Chaillot. Henrietta Maria thus inaugurated the house of refuge destined to be in future years the solace of her son's wife, Mary of Modena, under equally sad, if less tragic circumstances.

The Queen dedicated her life to the care and education of her children, and in the routine of her methodical existence the years passed unperceived. She was only reminded of the rapid strides of time when, Princess Henrietta Anne being ten years of age, the Queen Mother used all her powers of persuasion to induce Henrietta Maria to emerge from her life of seclusion and to accompany her daughter to the receptions at Court.

For a long time Henrietta Maria refused to listen to a proposal, not only distasteful to her own feelings, but, as she argued, detrimental to her child, for whom she feared the perils and frivolities of Court life. Anne of Austria, however, admitted no refusal, and represented to Henrietta Maria that the Princess had attained the recognised age for being presented at Court.

A ball given at Court in 1654, on the occasion of the Prince de Conti's marriage, furnished a plea for

the *début* of the young Princess, a chance not to be refused. The first step having been thus taken, the little Princess Henrietta Anne was fairly launched on the dangerous shoals of Court life under Louis XIV. She held the first rank amongst the *débutantes*, and, child though she was, even at that age she possessed the innate charm of personal attraction, and cultivated it to such an extent that it was impossible to resist her fascination and winning manners.

The coronation of Louis XIV. at Rheims was the first public function to which Henrietta Maria thought it her duty to accompany her daughter, painful though the ceremony was to herself. She only assisted at it on the condition that she might take her place in the cathedral as a private spectator without any suite, and insisted that her equipage should be the most unostentatious in the procession.

Soon after this ceremony the Princess of Orange came to Paris to see her mother, Henrietta Maria ; and her young sister took part in an entertainment given by the Duc d'Orléans at the Palais Royal in honour of the Princess.

Anne of Austria no longer disguised her wish that Louis XIV. should ask his cousin's hand in marriage, and hoped that by encouraging constant meetings, and by inviting the Princess to the small balls that she herself gave at the Louvre, the King would be imperceptibly attracted by his cousin's charms. But though Louis XIV. was an assiduous partner of hers at all the balls he felt no predilection for a

little girl of twelve, only treating her with such playful attentions as an elder cousin might employ towards a clever, amusing child. It was still more improbable that he should give her any serious thoughts as, at this moment, he was very much in love with another lady. The Queen Mother, therefore, had to give up the prospect of taking in her own hands any decisions for her son's future.

The peace between France and Spain in 1659 led to the betrothal of the King with the Infanta Maria Theresa, and Anne of Austria having failed in marrying her eldest son according to her wishes, turned her attentions to the welfare of Philippe, Duc d'Orléans.

No mother idolised her sons more than Anne of Austria. She had personally superintended their education and entirely formed their manners. She had inculcated Monsieur at an early age with the respect he owed his brother as head of the family as well as head of the nation.<sup>1</sup>

During their boyhood both Louis XIV. and his brother were as much admired for their kind dispositions as for their good looks, but as they advanced in years they gradually lost all similarity of character, and the sombre, suspicious nature of Monsieur soon

<sup>1</sup> The custom of calling the brother next in succession to the King of France by the name of "Monsieur" was first established by Gaston d'Orléans, brother of Louis XIII. The title of "Madame" was equally the prerogative enjoyed by Monsieur's wife in distinction to the King's daughters, who, while claiming the right of being called "Madame," could only enforce the observance as a prefix to their Christian names (Saint Simon, tome xii., p. 41).

estranged him from the sympathy so largely bestowed on Louis XIV.

Two years after his brother's marriage with the Infanta, Philippe d'Orléans expressed a wish to follow his example, and appealed to his mother that a suitable alliance should be arranged for him.

Without much hesitation Anne of Austria's choice fell on Henrietta Maria's sympathetic daughter, and it required but little persuasion on the part of the Queen Mother to obtain Henrietta Maria's consent to a marriage which, though not the brilliant alliance she had fondly conceived, was, nevertheless, not to be despised.

All the formalities of marriage having been carried out, the necessary arrangements were made in view of the coming event. Mazarin, in spite of his pronounced antipathy to the Princess's family, felt himself obliged on this occasion to offer a splendid banquet to the royalties of France and England. Doubtless, whilst dispensing lavish hospitality to his guests and exchanging toasts expressive of the cordiality reigning between the Courts of France and England, the fertile brain of the Cardinal had already worked out schemes by which this alliance should be of profit to France.

The Cardinal was at the height of his power at this time ; his compulsory absence from France, owing to political complications, contrary to the dictum that "les absents ont tort," had worked in his favour. His extraordinary capabilities were appreciated as

they merited ; his many faults were buried in oblivion. To him had fallen the honour of negotiating the Treaty of the Pyrenees—a treaty sealed by the Infanta's marriage with the King of France—and he intended that the coming marriage of the Princess of England with the Duc d'Orléans should also contribute to his prestige.

The Princess was at this moment in the flower of good looks. The combination of the brilliant life at Court in which she had taken part and the contrasting seclusion of the cloisters where she constantly retired with her mother, had produced one of the most seductive women of her time. It was difficult to realise that she was barely sixteen years of age. She impressed all those who addressed her as being a most perfectly formed, highly cultivated, and sympathetic person. She was the centre of attention whether at a Court function, where her youthful mien and unaffected gaiety brightened all those around her, or whether she was discussing serious subjects with people far senior to her in years, but her inferiors in quickness of perception or intelligence. The following description of her between the age of fifteen and sixteen portrays to us her extraordinary charm and grace :—

“The nobility of her birth is easily noticed by the distinction of her presence and mien. She promises to be very tall, and her figure is well proportioned. Her hair is a lovely shade of chestnut and suits her complexion, which is both

brilliant and delicate. Her blue eyes are full of expression, her mouth is beautifully shaped, and so are her hands and arms. She is excessively intelligent, and her remarkable intuition excites surprise when serious matters are concerned, and wins the affection of those who enjoy daily intercourse with her. She is gentle and obliging, and though she is capable of saying sharp things, she refrains from doing so owing to her kind nature. She dedicates the greatest part of her time to learning how to carry out, in the best possible way, the duties required of her in her position, and the few spare moments left to her to dispose of are passed in perfecting herself in science and accomplishments. She dances with incomparable grace, she sings like an angel, and no one is a more finished performer on the spinet than she."<sup>1</sup>

Whilst the prospective marriage festivities and arrangements were under discussion, Queen Henrietta Maria received the good news of her son's recall to England by the unanimous wish of the nation. The warm reception accorded him when he landed at Dover from the Hague was sufficient reward to his fond mother for the careful guidance and wise advice she had given her two sons when they were left entirely to her responsibility.

The arrival of Charles II. in England, and his wish to see his mother, coincided with her own desire to be present at the meeting of Parliament

<sup>1</sup> Juin, 1658. MS. de Conrart in folio ix., 705.

when the subject of Henrietta Anne's marriage dowry was to come under discussion. The Queen and the Princess left Paris in the autumn of 1660 ; at Calais they were met by the Duke of York, in command of the fleet, accompanied by many of the English nobility ; they formed an escort in the crossing from Calais to Dover, which took two days to accomplish, owing to a dead calm. On arriving at Dover they found Charles waiting to greet them ; he received his mother and sister with every mark of affection, and by easy stages the royal party and their suite proceeded to London, stopping at Canterbury and Rochester. The river was followed as far as Lambeth, from whence they crossed the Thames in barges to Whitehall.

The Queen had urgently expressed her wish that a public entry into London might, if possible, be avoided.

Many opinions were thrown out as to the reason for this desire on the Queen's part. Whilst some suggested it was but a natural wish in order to avoid painful reminiscences, others tried to ascribe a deeper motive in the Queen's request for privacy, and considered that remorse occupied a large share in her sorrow ; for though she had been an affectionate and good wife to her unfortunate husband, she instinctively felt that the late King's partisans laid to her charge a serious share in the terrible calamity. Her bigotry and want of tact influenced him to act on many occasions in a way that greatly aggravated the

difficulties of his situation and indirectly advanced the final disaster.

But the tact that was lacking in the mother was amply made up for in the daughter. In a few days London was at her feet, and by her graciousness and amiability to everyone, all classes contended for the honour of giving her pleasure and making her visit to England agreeable.

The dowry voted by Parliament on her marriage was 40,000 jacobus,<sup>1</sup> equivalent to 560,000 francs; Charles II. added a further sum of 20,000 jacobus, which he presented to his sister partly in coin and partly in jewellery. On the part of Louis XIV. and his brother they guaranteed a dowry on the landed properties belonging to Monsieur, and besides an annual sum of 40,000 francs, the beautifully furnished château of Montargis was offered her as a residence.<sup>2</sup>

The Members of the House of Commons begged her acceptance of 10,000 jacobus as a present on her approaching marriage, which was acknowledged by the Princess, the same day as they had voted this testimony of their regard, in a charming letter of thanks, and while begging the indulgence of the members for expressing herself so imperfectly in English, she said she felt she could lay claim to their pardon as her heart turned with unchanging affection to her native country.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A gold coin so called from James I. of England, in whose reign it was struck.

<sup>2</sup> Baillon, p. 49.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.

Henrietta Maria's dowry had also been agreed upon, though not without a certain amount of difficulty, owing to the devastation that had been wrought by the Revolution on crown property. In order to obtain the dowry she had to engage herself to reside part of the year in London, so that the money voted might be spent in England.<sup>1</sup>

The Princess's power over the people became so great that loud protestations were raised against such a charming lady being affianced to the Prince of any country save her own. Charles II., who had not seen his sister for some years during his residence at the Hague, was as much enchanted by her amiability as he was struck with her common sense and correct judgment on matters of importance. He showed his appreciation of her capacities and his affection for her by every means in his power, and loaded her with beautiful presents.

Whilst the Princess was winning popularity on all sides in England, Monsieur despatched one courier after another to hasten the return of his *fiancée*, for though he was incapable of any sincere attachment for anyone, his sinister and jealous disposition made him always ready to take offence and to consider himself slighted if he was not consulted on all matters. Queen Henrietta Maria, thinking it wise not to thwart the wishes of her future son-in-law, with grief and sorrow tore herself away from the embraces of her two sons, not knowing when she would see them again.

<sup>1</sup> Baillon, p. 53.

The preparations for a return to France were made and the Queen and Princess were on the point of starting when the Princess of Orange, who was also in London at that time, was attacked with small-pox, and, as in the case of her brother the Duke of Gloucester who had died from the same illness, she succumbed in a few days. Thus the newly affianced bride had twice within a few months seen the shadow of death across her path.

As soon as the interment of the Princess had taken place in Westminster Abbey (a ceremony of great solemnity performed at night by torch-light), the Queen hastened to take her remaining daughter away from a place that haunted her with gloomy forebodings.

The return voyage was not accomplished with the same success as had smiled on their arrival in England. While battling against a storm, the violence of which threatened to sink the ship, the Princess developed a severe attack of measles and almost all hope of saving her was given up. The Duke of Buckingham, who had shown the Princess marked attention in England, and had prevailed on Charles to grant him permission to accompany his royal relatives on their voyage, was beside himself with grief at the prospect of the untimely end of the Princess. It is related that his despair at the prospect of a calamity was so great that not till all anxiety was allayed, and the crisis of the illness passed, would he consent to eat his food, which during the three

days' apprehension of a catastrophe he had left untouched.

After this disastrous voyage the Queen and Princess returned to Chaillot by easy stages, and decided to remain there till they received the Pope's dispensation for the marriage, during which time the Princess was quite restored to health. The same day that the dispensation arrived, in March, 1661, Cardinal Mazarin died at Vincennes. He showed as much philosophy and courage in his last moments as he had done during his brilliant yet, at times, criticised career ; and it was not till his vacant place had to be filled, that the full extent of his powerful personal influence was realised.

The marriage contract was signed on the 30th of March, and the marriage, which was destined to be attended with the fatality so inevitably attending any undertaking of the Stuarts, took place the following evening in the private chapel of the Queen of England's palace. The ceremony was unattended with any show or pomp, as it was the Lenten season, the members of the royal family being alone present. Henrietta Maria offered a supper to all those who had assisted at the marriage, and thus the wedding day was brought to a close. The following morning the bride received the customary visits of congratulation, and she soon fell into the routine of her new life.

It was soon perceived that the momentary passion with which the Princess had inflamed Philippe

d'Orléans had been purely ephemeral, and as soon as the sense of possession in regard to his wife became more pronounced, the worst traits of his character came to the surface. His effeminate, mean nature was incapable of appreciating his wife's far nobler standard of life, consequently anyone who approached Madame was singled out as a prey of his jealousy. Even before marriage he had expressed great annoyance at the Duke of Buckingham's attentions to her, and now his suspicions fell on his brother.

Louis XIV., who had repudiated any interest in Henrietta Anne when the subject of a matrimonial alliance with her was mooted by his mother, now that she was his sister-in-law considered her from a very different point of view. Louis not only up to the time of her marriage had disdained to look with favour on her, but on noticing Monsieur's impatience to obtain the consent of Charles II. to his proposed marriage with the Princess, had sneered at his brother's ardour, and contemptuously remarked that he need not be in such a hurry to marry a bag of bones, "les os des Saints Innocents."

There was no doubt that the Princess as a child was painfully thin, and report went so far as to say that she was even slightly deformed, but she had greatly improved in looks since the day when as a child of ten she was the King's favourite partner at the Court balls. According to Mademoiselle de Montpensier, so great was her charm and general appearance of comeliness increasing in proportion with her years, that it

never occurred to anyone to criticise the grave defect of her figure ; on the contrary, she was often complimented on the grace of her movements.

Louis XIV. gladly availed himself of the distraction afforded him by his sister-in-law's Court, and threw himself with alacrity into the amusements and fêtes given by the Duke and Duchess at the Palais Royal. When the following winter approached, and Madame owing to her state of health was forced to abandon her life of social functions, the King was most assiduous in his attentions, and by daily intercourse with Henrietta Anne he admitted to himself how completely wrong had been his previous impression of the Princess. During those months of enforced idleness the Duchess received her friends as soon as her toilette was completed in the morning till nine o'clock in the evening. On being ushered into her room her visitors found her beautifully dressed, lying on her bed, the curtains of which were thrown apart that she might enjoy the pleasure of conversing with her numerous guests.

The King's daily visits greatly encouraged the reports that had been already circulated when the Court was at Fontainebleau regarding the attentions he was paying his sister-in-law.

Madame had great difficulties to contend with owing to her high position in a Court where morals were very lax and principles were swept away in the vortex of perpetual pleasures. Some of the censure from which she could not escape she doubtless brought

on herself through her coquetry, which arose from high spirits and the wish to please. Her powers of attracting admiration she had cultivated to such an extent that, without any ulterior motives, she imperceptibly fascinated all those who frequented the Court, a result which led to endless scenes with her husband, who found himself confronted with rivals on every side.

We owe to Mademoiselle de Montpensier a daily chronicle relating to the political and social incidents that took place at Court. Mademoiselle was the daughter of Gaston d'Orléans, a brother of the late King, and no one was better qualified than she to reveal to us the intrigues, frivolities, and petty jealousies of her cousin's Court. Her Memoirs are an inexhaustible fund of anecdotes and graphic descriptions of all the passing events.

She relates that the Queen Mother was greatly annoyed at the constant quarrels that arose between Monsieur and Madame; the former having found a new subject for his complaints in the attentions paid to his wife by the Comte de Guiche. Anne of Austria, in one of these moments of displeasure, vented the vexation she felt on Mademoiselle, and upbraided her as being the cause of the present disagreeable state of affairs. She argued that had Mademoiselle married the Duke according to the Queen's wish none of these domestic disagreements would have occurred, —quite forgetting that she herself had been the promoter of the alliance.

Shortly after one of these repeated quarrels, the premature confinement of Madame was the cause of further recriminations from the Queen Mother. She took this opportunity to reproach her daughter-in-law for her frivolous life, and with great harshness made her responsible for the mishap which had just taken place, owing to the want of care on Madame's part. Henrietta Anne resented the Queen Mother's constant interference, and replied that anxiety regarding her brother, the Duke of York, who was engaged in the naval war, and of whose safety as yet no tidings had been confirmed, had worried her considerably, and was the sole reason for the misfortune that had just befallen her.

Fortunately a political question arose at this time between France and England which occupied Madame's leisure moments and lulled Monsieur's suspicions regarding the friendly terms existing between his brother and his wife.

For a long while past Louis XIV. had watched a favourable moment to regain possession of the town of Dunkirk, which had fallen into the hands of the English under the protectorate of Cromwell. The accession of Charles II. to the throne appeared to the French monarch a fitting occasion to negotiate with him on the subject. Charles II. was quite aware that the proposal made by France placed him in a difficult position, and he realised the importance of avoiding all transactions that might give offence to his people; but when he recognised the impoverished state of the

Treasury, and his total inadequacy of means to enable him to keep up either the army on a proper footing, or the royal palaces in proper style, he sent Montagu, one of his most able diplomatists, over to France, and instructed him to consult Madame on the affair in hand, and confided to him a letter in which he urged Henrietta Anne to assist him to the best of her ability.

Though Montagu ostensibly concluded the bargain between the two kings, still it was due to Madame's tact and practical judgment that a rupture on this delicate question was avoided ; and, in fact, through her influence with Charles II., he consented to part with Dunkirk on the payment of £400,000 from France. Her brother and Louis XIV. were both equally struck at Madame's capacities for evolving solutions to diplomatic difficulties, and, after this satisfactory conclusion in regard of the sale of Dunkirk, she was invariably chosen as intermediary on any matter requiring sound advice and good judgment.

These negotiations, which had entailed a fair amount of correspondence and long interviews with officials concerned in the transaction, had served as an interlude to the daily quarrels between Monsieur and Madame, but when there was no political preoccupation to intrude on the time passed in domestic differences, the Duke resumed his customary habit of spying on his wife's movements.

Mademoiselle de Montpensier gives the following

facts, which, according to her opinion, were the cause of the final rupture between Monsieur and Madame which terminated eventually in the catastrophe leading to her death. Henrietta Anne had taken a violent aversion to the Chevalier de Lorraine, one of her husband's favourites, who lived in the Palais Royal. This antipathy became so pronounced that she influenced the King to believe that the Chevalier had gained undue authority over Monsieur which might lead to very bad results not only to herself, but to the King as well. She represented to Louis XIV. how disastrous it might easily become to his position as Sovereign, should the Duke continue as he was doing, in making the Chevalier de Lorraine a confidant of public as well as private concerns. The King entirely concurred in Madame's views, and showed his disapproval of his brother's intimacy with the Chevalier by ordering de Lorraine to leave the Palace ; he was then placed under arrest and imprisoned in Château Neuf for a long time. After he was liberated from prison he went to Rome and resided for some years in Italy ; he did not return to France till after Madame's death.

It was unfortunate that the banishment of the Chevalier de Lorraine should have been due to Madame's influence with the King, as not only did the Duke become more morose and inconsiderate towards his wife than hitherto, but it roused his worst passions, and from a mean spirit of revenge for the power she exercised over the King, he began

openly to accuse her of inconstancy. Madame felt the isolation of her home life, and passed most of her day in the King's company, who took her into his confidence regarding future negotiations with England on another political question. Long before this moment the King, with his well-known inconstancy, had transferred his affections to Mademoiselle de la Vallière, one of Madame's ladies-in-waiting. The Duchess could not avoid feeling some slight mortification at having lost her former hold on the King, but she had the far greater satisfaction of observing the deference shown her by Louis XIV. on matters requiring careful discrimination, and though he was desperately in love with Louise de la Vallière, he never neglected to show his sister-in-law both affection and consideration.

Mademoiselle de Montpensier, who was a spectator of the dreary life imposed on Madame by Monsieur, relates that it was impossible not to feel sympathy for her sad position. Madame opened her heart to Mademoiselle, and said, "Up to the present we have been strangers to each other, but you have a kind heart and I am not as bad as people think, so do let us be good friends." Mademoiselle was incapable of resisting this appeal for friendship, and a new rebuff on the part of Monsieur towards his wife led her to espouse Madame's cause with all the greater interest.

The 30th of April, 1669, the Duchess of Orleans had given birth to a daughter, who, at a later period of history, married the Duke of Savoy, and was the

Princess on whose life our interest is centred and who forms the principal subject of this work. Hardly had the confinement taken place than Madame was acquainted of the almost sudden death of her mother, the unfortunate widow of Charles I. This was a very great sorrow to Madame, and her grief was all the deeper through her inability to have assisted at her last moments.

Queen Henrietta Maria died at Sainte Colombe, a small country house on the banks of the Seine, where she had resided of late years, with the exception of her short visits to England.

The King and Queen Marie Thérèse came to Saint Cloud, where Madame was living, to offer their condolences, after which they, the Duke of Orleans, and the whole Court left her for the Château de Chambord, where they announced their intention of residing for a whole month.

Monsieur was far too selfish to sacrifice any pleasure for his wife, who was thus left alone in a state of physical weakness and profound depression on the loss of her mother, without anyone to console her on a grief that she never got over and which added considerably to the gloom of her life.<sup>1</sup>

Amongst the few ladies left to keep her company and to whom she was attached was Madame de St. Chaumont, who had been chosen by Madame in the capacity of governess to her children. The choice having been hers, it was a new source of annoyance

<sup>1</sup> Baillon, p. 364.

when she was informed by the Duke that he had replaced Madame de St. Chaumont by the Maréchale de Clérambault, and begged the former lady to leave the Court. Madame de St. Chaumont was aunt of De Guiche; therefore there may have been some foundation for the suggestion that Monsieur had taken this step in order to make himself disagreeable to Madame and to show his disapproval of the Comte de Guiche's attentions to his wife. Though the Maréchale de Clérambault was a woman well versed in Latin, astrology, and other sciences, she was totally deficient in the qualities necessary for the education of the Princesses.

Preparations for a visit to Flanders were now being made on a large scale, and turned the attention of the Court from the wearisome dissensions between Madame and her husband. Flanders had fallen into the possession of France consequent on a secret treaty with the Emperor Leopold, and Louis XIV. intended that his tour in the country of his latest conquest should surpass any other royal progress in grandeur and magnificence.<sup>1</sup> The King took all the greater interest in this projected journey as he had confided to Madame his wish that she should take advantage of this move to proceed eventually to England on a secret mission to her brother. Before the departure of the Court, Henrietta Anne desired that the baptism of the Princess, who was to be known under the title of Mademoiselle de Valois,

<sup>1</sup> *Siècle de Louis XIV.*, Voltaire, chap. ix. p. 84.

should take place. The child was a year old, and it was customary that children should not be baptised till the age of twelve, but owing to the long absence in prospect it was hurried on by Madame's wish. The ceremony took place at the Palais Royal on the 8th April, 1670, in presence of the King and Queen and the whole Court. The Dauphin accepted the charge of godfather, whilst Mademoiselle de Montpensier was godmother of the Princess Anna Maria, future Duchess of Savoy.<sup>1</sup> The ceremony was thus chronicled in the *Gazette de France*, the official paper of current events :—

“ Mademoiselle de Valois was baptised by the Bishop of Vabre, Monsieur's private chaplain, in the chapel of the Palais Royal. The Princess was held by the Maréchale de Clérambault, the governess of H.R.H.'s children, and was named Anne by the Dauphin and Mademoiselle d'Orléans. The ceremony took place in the presence of the King and Queen and their Royal Highnesses, besides the Prince de Condé, the Duc and Duchesse d'Engugien, the Prince de Conti with his two sons, the Princesse de Carignan, and the lords and ladies of the highest families. All assisted to make this function one of the most important. The ceremony had been preceded by a magnificent dinner offered by Monsieur in his large dining-hall to their Majesties, the Dauphin and Mademoiselle d'Orléans. After this grand fête the Court returned to St. Germain.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Baillon, 391.

<sup>2</sup> *Gazette de France*, 1670. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



ANNA D'ORLÉANS MOGLIE DI VITTORIO AMEDEO II. VENUTA IN CHERASCO NELL' ANNO 1706  
*From a picture in the Palazzo Regina Margherita, Rome  
By gracious permission of Her Majesty Queen Margherita*

ANNA MARIA D'ORLÉANS, FIRST QUEEN OF SICILY AND SARDINIA



The graphic description of the royal progress to Flanders, as brought before us by Mademoiselle de Montpensier, is a delightful account of the pomp and ceremony attendant on any change of destination made by the Court in those days. Still more on this occasion, in order to impress the new subjects of France, was the procession of coaches, servants, and the numerous suite of each member of the royal family imposing. In addition to this large retinue an army corps accompanied the Court under the command of M. de Lauzun, who also assumed the responsibility of the choice of route. Many amusing incidents attending the journey were noted by Mademoiselle. Thus, on one occasion, owing to a river being impassable through heavy rains, they found themselves forced to pass the night in a granary. After a meagre supper, when the Queen complained that she had been overlooked and no soup had been offered her, they retired to seek such rest as they could find on hard mattresses placed on the floor, on which they threw themselves in their travelling clothes. From these uninviting beds they were roused at four a.m. by M. de Lauzun, who brought the news that he had thrown a bridge across the river, and the journey was to be resumed. The ladies, still half asleep, regained their coaches, and Mademoiselle, not without a suspicion of malice, noticed that those who were in the habit of rouging looked very faded after their unrestful night, whereas she, who did not follow that fashion,

flattered herself that she looked much fresher than they did.

At almost each town where they halted the King reviewed the troops, notwithstanding the heavy rains, which appear to have been incessant.

To Mademoiselle this prolonged journey seems to have been most enjoyable in spite of all the drawbacks, and we are able to gather that the constant opportunities thus afforded her of seeing M. de Lauzun, for whom she had a weakness, was the chief reason of her pleasure.

To Madame, on the contrary, no respite was brought to her daily life of disagreements with Monsieur, and the close confinement of a coach with her husband, who took pleasure in tormenting her, was almost unendurable. One of his chief forms of vexing her was to state repeatedly to others, when his wife was present, that astrologers had predicted that he would have several wives, an event for which he announced he was quite prepared, as he considered Madame's health to be very critical.

No one knew what answer or remarks to make to these cruel sentiments towards Madame, and it was no matter for surprise that as soon as they reached the halting-place for the night she always hurried to her room, and did not appear again till it was time to start the next day.<sup>1</sup>

It was generally remarked that Henrietta Anne was in very low spirits, and she was certainly indisposed ;

<sup>1</sup> *Mémoires*, vol. vi. p. 77.

the day was often passed without food, beyond an occasional glass of milk, and the King showed serious concern at her evident delicacy of health, largely due to mental depression. She was anxiously waiting the moment to escape from Monsieur's unkindness, and when on reaching Courtrai she found a message from her brother urging her to go to England, her drooping spirits revived, and she communicated to the King her brother's desire that she should not delay in starting for Dover, where he would be waiting to receive her.

Monsieur was excessively annoyed when he was informed of Madame's early departure for England, and exerted himself to the utmost to prevent it ; but it was not likely that Louis XIV., who had connived at Madame's journey for political purposes, would allow his brother's personal grievances to stand in the way.

The Duchess was accompanied by the whole Court to Lille, and from thence to Dunkirk. The deepest sympathy for her was universally felt, and Monsieur's harsh conduct was severely criticised. One day in despair she had exclaimed to Mademoiselle, " If I have really been as guilty as he would wish to prove, why did he not strangle me at the time that he says he witnessed my infidelity to him ? "<sup>1</sup>

Even up to the last moments before Madame's departure Monsieur spoke in such violent terms to his wife at table before all the company that Mademoiselle

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. vi. p. 50.

said no one present dared to take any initiative, nor did they interfere for fear of increasing his violence ; but she herself felt sure that any lasting reconciliation between them would ever after be impossible.<sup>1</sup>

Madame finally embarked for Dover with her suite of 230 on the 24th of May, 1670. The last words of injunction from Monsieur that she was only to be accorded an absence of three days, and on no account to go to London, was still ringing sadly in her ears, but when the white cliffs of Dover appeared in sight and the grey sky of the north filled her with the joy of nearing the land which she always associated with the word home, the past vexations were momentarily forgotten, and it is easy to imagine with what emotion she saw a large barge advancing to meet her, in which she distinguished the King, the Duke of York, Prince Rupert, and the Duke of Monmouth, who all welcomed her warmly to the land of her birth.

Old Dover Castle had been fitted up for Madame's use, and as the moments were precious, the day after her arrival she entered into confidential conversation with her brothers on the mission for which she had come.

The "infamous treaty" with France, to quote Macaulay's words, was ratified in a great measure through the influence exercised by the Duchess of Orleans in both Courts of England and France, and it required but slight persuasion to induce Charles

<sup>1</sup> *Mémoires*, vol. vi. p. 79.

to forget his obligations to Holland and to shake off his adherence to the Triple Alliance. This secret treaty of Dover, though skilfully negotiated, detracted considerably from the prestige of both Louis XIV. and Charles II.

By this alliance Charles not only abandoned Holland, but agreed to join the French monarch in declaring war against his former allies. Louis XIV. undertook to provide Charles with an annual subsidy of three millions as long as the war lasted, and the French King further designated the Isle of Walcheren and two fortresses on the Scheldt as England's share in the invasion. The Treaty of Dover was based on the understanding that Charles should announce his conversion to the Church of Rome, and in the event of any disturbances arising owing to the King's breach of faith with his subjects, France guaranteed to support his cause and to furnish him with means to carry out his resolution.<sup>1</sup>

The only part of this ignoble transaction which Charles did not observe was that concerning his religion. The Nonconformists had to be considered, and he reserved pronouncing any declaration on his faith till the moment of his death. It is reported that his conversion to Roman Catholicism was wrung from him by his brother, the Duke of York.

The treaty having been signed by the English Ministers and Colbert de Croissy, the French Ambas-

<sup>1</sup> *History of the English People*, vol. iii. chap. ix., J. R. Green. Macmillan, 1894.

sador, Madame, after receiving the felicitations of the Court at the important part she had played in an alliance upon which the two countries founded great expectations, had to say farewell to her brothers, and not without serious forebodings on the reception that awaited her from Monsieur, she returned to Paris. Here she was met by the King, and she gave him the messages with which she was charged from both her brothers. The result of the voyage had exceeded the King's most sanguine expectations, and he found it difficult to find words to express his contentment and satisfaction at the successful termination of Madame's mission.

Monsieur had left it to the King to meet his wife, and owing to the fact that he was excluded from all the Cabinet Councils, the private communications that passed between his brother and Madame became a renewed source of suspicion. The King had every reason to believe that Monsieur on more occasions than one had divulged deliberations taken by the Ministers at the Councils, a matter which necessitated his exclusion when affairs of importance were under discussion.

Henrietta Anne instinctively felt that relations between her husband and herself were approaching a crisis. She realised that the attitude of reserve she was forced to adopt relating to her private conversations with the King were most compromising and detrimental to her position with Monsieur, but when she pointed out to Louis XIV. how perplexed

she was as to the advisability of keeping Monsieur ignorant on the subject of their secret understanding, the King implored her not to divulge to Philippe what he had confided to her only, until a public announcement could be made of the negotiations with England.

Madame herself felt an increasing insecurity as to her relations with her husband, but the King and Queen, though they realised the strained condition of affairs between Monsieur and Madame, were totally unprepared for the disaster that took place. A few days after renewed interviews had passed between the King and Madame, the Queen, attended by Mademoiselle de Montpensier, was taking her customary walk by the canal in the park of Versailles, when a messenger approached them and said he had been sent in all haste by Monsieur from St. Cloud to announce to Her Majesty that Madame had been taken suddenly very ill, and that she herself asserted she had been poisoned. Madame implored the Queen to hasten to see her before it was too late.

The Queen, when she heard these disastrous tidings, hurriedly got into her coach with Mademoiselle, and after finding the King, they all proceeded to St. Cloud.

The spectacle that met their eyes was heartrending. Mademoiselle describes they found Madame lying on a small bed in terrible pain, her hair dishevelled and uncombed, her nightdress torn open by

her at the throat, the sleeves rolled up showing her bare arms, her cheeks without a trace of colour, the nose pinched, and death written in every line of her face.

As soon as they entered the room she exclaimed, "You see my pitiable state!" And she then murmured a few words to the King only; and to Mademoiselle she said, "You are going to lose a good friend who was just beginning to know and love you." Even at that moment that brought despair to everyone's heart and seemed to paralyse any effort being made to save her, all those round Madame's bed were still further horror-stricken on observing the attitude of total indifference with which Monsieur gazed on the unhappy woman who lay stretched before him in agonies; he approached the bed and coldly contemplated her beautiful face distorted by suffering, and contented himself with inquiring, "Who would be the most advisable confessor to call to assist Madame," insisting on the necessity of having one whose name would look well in the *Court Gazette*.

The doctors who had been hurriedly called in stood a little way apart conversing together, too much aghast to suggest any remedy, not daring to pronounce an opinion, nor to say anything that might oblige them to corroborate Madame's terrible accusations. No attention was paid to the unhappy woman's request that an anti-poison should be administered to her, and not until the King, scandal-

ised at the apathy of all those round her bed, exclaimed that never had a woman been allowed to die like this without any effort being made to save her, did the physicians come forward and give orders for an emetic. The Queen remained in a corner of the room sobbing bitterly, and the dramatic picture was completed when Louise de la Vallière, putting from her memory their small rivalries of former days, approached her bed and, kneeling down, bathed Madame's hands with her tears. She, the repentant Magdalen who had suffered and endured much humiliation, could alone be in perfect sympathy with a fellow-sufferer, and a look of affection and gratitude cast on her by the dying Princess reassured La Vallière that the jealousy that had once marred all kindly sentiments was dispersed and that their souls were in close communion.

The King and Queen had retired before the end, and the close of the ten hours' agony was witnessed by Bossuet, then Bishop of Condom, and the English Ambassador, who had been sent for hurriedly from Paris. To him she affirmed a few minutes before her death that she died poisoned. She entirely exculpated Louis XIV. in the matter, and implored the Ambassador to use his influence with her brother not to avenge her death. With her eyes fixed on the crucifix held up before her by Bossuet, with words of forgiveness for those who had wronged her on her lips, the grievously tormented Princess passed away from further suffering June 30th, 1670.

Bossuet was received by the King and Queen at Versailles to relate the details of Madame's last moments, and in simple and dignified language expatiated on her exemplary death.

An autopsy was ordered by the King, and the diagnosis of the doctors on the illness was certified by them as "Cholera Morbus," but this attestation on the part of the physicians was powerless to allay the certainty of the public that there had been foul play. These reports gained so much credence that serious apprehensions of a rupture with England were entertained. In fact, after the first moments of horror and despair at such an unforeseen catastrophe, Charles used most menacing language against the French Court, and for some days the two countries hourly expected that war would be declared between the Sovereigns. It was chiefly due to the English Ambassador, who forcibly represented to Charles how much he had been impressed by the dying Princess's last words imploring that no violent measures should be resorted to, that the King consented to be pacified and renounced breaking relations with France, which, at that moment, would have been against the interests of both countries.

Mademoiselle de Montpensier, in her touching account of this terrible tragedy, mentions that Monsieur begged her to go to St. Germain and see the little Princess Anna, who was barely over a year old at the time of her mother's death. Mademoiselle dressed herself in deep mourning, and

in a coach drawn by horses heavily trapped in woe, she carried out the Duke's wish and offered the child such care as it was in her power to give.

Monsieur showed as much unconcern after the funeral as he had done previous to his wife's tragic end. All this confirmed the suspicion to which some writers give credence that he was not absolutely ignorant of the sinister designs of the Chevalier de Lorraine, who had sworn vengeance against the Duchess ever since his banishment from Court, which had been due to her influence with the King. Other rumours report that the increased favour shown her by Louis XIV. since her return from England, and the importance attached to her opinion on all political and private affairs, convinced the Chevalier that as long as Madame thus dominated the King, his exile would be indefinitely prolonged. The Chevalier in this supposition worked on the susceptibilities of a former aide-de-camp of his, still in Monsieur's service, named d'Effiat, and led him to believe that he also would in all probability be replaced at Court through Madame's influence. In those days of intrigues, and at a time when death by poison was the expedient generally employed for speedily removing any intruder or undesirable person, it would not require much persuasion on the part of the Chevalier de Lorraine to induce d'Effiat to put some poison in a glass of chicory water that Madame was in the habit of drinking during the day. In Madame la Fayette's opinion the Chevalier and

d'Effiat were the criminals ; the Duke's indifference to his wife's death, combined with his ill-treatment of her during his life, gave rise to reports relative to his share in the murder, but Madame la Fayette always maintained that he was absolutely innocent of the designs which were in fact executed by his friend entirely of his own initiative.<sup>1</sup>

Bossuet's thrilling words on the close of Madame's brief but by no means unimportant passage through life bring forcibly before us how deeply she was identified with the interests of the French nation. As he pathetically dwelt on the goodness which characterised the Princess, whose thoughtfulness for others never abandoned her till her death, the evident emotion of the Bishop was communicated to all his audience, and sobs were heard in many parts of the mourning-draped church. The intensity of the emotion increased as, gaining in power, the voice of the preacher vibrated down the high vaulted nave of St. Denis, the resting-place of many generations of crowned heads, and a shudder passed through the awe-stricken congregation when he in his powerful peroration pronounced the impressive words, "Madame se meurt, Madame est morte." In recalling her acts of courtesy and kindness, none save a few of his hearers knew that he was referring to a last kind attention on her part that touched him personally. Just before Madame died, and in the

<sup>1</sup> *Histoire d'Henriette d'Angleterre*, par Madame de la Fayette. Paris, 1853.

midst of her excruciating agonies, her unfailing solicitude for others was still foremost with her, and she handed to one of her ladies an emerald which she always wore, with injunctions that after her death it was to be remitted to Bossuet, as a parting souvenir in remembrance of her admiration and affection for the distinguished prelate. This emerald from that day never left the Bishop's finger. On the death of Madame, the care of Anna and her elder sister Marie Louise devolved on Monsieur, who after a short year's mourning for the sake of appearances married again. This time the King designated as Monsieur's bride Charlotte Princess Palatine. She was considered the most antipathetic and least pleasing princess of any of the courts of Europe; but if she lacked personal charm, she greatly assisted Monsieur in the charge of the children, and bestowed on them affectionate interest and attention.

These opening pages relating to the Duchess of Savoy's mother may to some extent have drawn attention to the closely woven intrigues of the Court of France at that time. These intrigues were not confined to France alone, and in the subsequent chapters it will be found that no country suffered more than Savoy from the perpetual harassing occasioned by the presumptuous French monarchs and their ministers.

France, however, defeated her own ends in the endeavour to force Savoy into submission. The eventual aggrandisement of this hitherto unimportant

state was the entirely unforeseen result, owing to the repeated campaigns thrust on her by France. In order to safeguard her interests and protect her subjects she found herself compelled to exercise her intelligence, and to prove her courage against so formidable a foe ; by labour and energy she rose from a province singled out for the contemptuous bondage of France, to be one of the leading European powers. The history of the Court of Savoy under Victor Amadeus and Anna Maria will bring into notice the strenuous exertions of one of the members of that noble house, who one and all were imbued with the laudable pride to work for the good of their country. Previous to dealing with this subject, in order to recall to mind how the House of Savoy from a small province gradually rose to fame, it will be advisable to cast a retrospective glance on the history of the country. Even in those days of long ago Savoy was an object of envy to all the surrounding states, whose attention was constantly directed to trying to impede her advance and hinder her from obtaining the smallest consideration from any European powers of importance.

## CHAPTER II

### SAVOY IN OLDEN DAYS

Eleanor of Provence—Her marriage with Henry III.—Count Peter of Savoy—His palace near the river—The first Duke of Lancaster—The traditions of the Savoy—The destruction of the palace—The origin of the Counts of Savoy—The ancient Sabaudia—The founder of the House—The valour of the Counts—Their steady progress—Foundation of the Order of the Annunziata—Philip of Spain bestows the garter on Emmanuel Philibert.

ONE of the most interesting records connecting the House of Savoy with the sovereigns of England dates from 1236. In that year Eleanor, daughter of Raymond Bérenger fourth Count of Provence, and of Beatrix, sister of Amadeus III. of Savoy, came to England as the promised bride of Henry III. She brought with her not only the poetry, but an atmosphere of romance from that bright and smiling corner of France where the seductive perfumes of orange blossoms and roses are wafted by the balmy breezes across the glades and meadows, and promoted musing reveries in those dreamy days of yore. This Princess from the fair land of Provence had inherited the poetic temperament so inherent to her country, and, like her parents, acquired some note as a poet. Save for an occasional break caused by raids and

skirmishes with unlawful intruders, or personal quarrels settled by hot-blooded knights with the sword, the composing of madrigals and villanelles was the chief occupation in the uneventful current of existence at that early period of history. They were the principal interludes in the easy flow of life. The dames for their part were content to sit at their tapestries surrounded with their damsels, or, as evening approached, they would step out on the balcony of their castellated homes and encourage, by word and look, the thrilling melodies of the troubadours' serenades. This was the birthplace of those singers of ballads who, nurtured in an atmosphere of love and romance, in the mellow rhythm of that dialect wove pretty sonnets intertwined with allusions to the charms of the gracious châtelaines, and thus laid their hearts at the feet of the maidens of fair Provence.

The marriage of Eleanor of Provence and Henry the Third took place in Canterbury Cathedral. The Princess appears to have been despatched to England without any dower, and did not enjoy as much popularity here as she merited, owing, to quote the words of a chronicler speaking of that time, "to the crowding to England of her relations." From the same source we learn that this caused alarm to the ministers, and fear was felt that her family would acquire too much influence over the King, and thereby the constitution of the country might be endangered.

Two of the Queen's uncles closely followed her

own arrival. One was Boniface, who was made Archbishop of Canterbury by the King, and to the other, Peter, he gave the large estate of Richmond, in Yorkshire, formerly the possession of the Dukes of Brittany, with the further honour of an earldom.

It does not appear that Peter of Savoy ever availed himself of the title of Earl of Richmond, but in all official documents continued to sign himself Peter of Savoy.

Count Peter of Savoy was born in 1203 ; he was the youngest of seven brothers, but eventually the successor of the Count of Savoy.

Count Peter was clever and ambitious, and determined to turn to his advantage his near relationship with the Queen of England.

He found no difficulty in ingratiating himself with the King, for Henry III. does not appear to have shared the antipathy of his ministers and courtiers for his wife's relations, and he received Count Peter with every mark of respect and affection. The Count arrived in England about Christmas, 1240. On March 25th, St. Edward's day, the King knighted him with great ceremony, and from that day treated him with such absolute confidence, that he frequently entrusted the Count with confidential missions to France.

Thus the Count's career in England opened under favourable auspices, but it was not enough for his aspirations, and he drew the King's attention to the

fact "that a town house was needful for him as a residence when the royal nephew and niece should be at their palace at Westminster." Therefore, on the 12th February, 1246, the King, in order to enable Peter to keep up a greater state, made a grant of the land lying between the Thames and the street called "la Straunde," "to his beloved uncle, Peter of Savoy."<sup>1</sup> Here he built himself a house, which was known as long as it stood as the Savoy Palace. He kept it in good repair, and furnished it with taste. The gardens sloped down to the river-bank; figs, cherries, and plum trees grew in abundance, and the "pleasaunce" was a favourite rendezvous of gay company.

Peter seems to have possessed versatile tastes, for besides leading a life of politics and devoting himself to studies in the "art of self-government," he was also very fond of a gay life, and it was related that "on one of his excursions to the Continent he returned with a boatful of young ladies with the avowed intention of marrying them to the wards of his nephew the King. The undertaking was highly successful, for many of the ladies married gentlemen of birth about the Court, with the Queen's special sanction, but to the great disgust of the English people, who 'hated furriners' in all cases, and specially in such cases as marriage and giving in marriage."<sup>2</sup>

The Count was almost always in England till 1255,

<sup>1</sup> *Memorials of the Savoy*, p. 5, Rev. J. Loftie. 1878.

<sup>2</sup> John E. Locking.

when he finally abandoned his palace on the river-bank. He had never succeeded in ingratiating himself with others outside the circle of his immediate royal relations, and though "he was a prudent and valiant man, and was surnamed by some 'the Second Charlemagne,' he shared in the unpopularity of all the Queen's foreign relations."<sup>1</sup>

Some accounts relate that he left his estate in the Strand to his niece, whereas others say that Queen Eleanor, who took the Savoy estate under her special protection, bought out the Friars of Mountjoy at Havering, in Norfolk, to whom the Count had bequeathed his property. Whichever version is accurate, it is certain that it soon fell into her hands after her uncle's departure, and she gave it to "her most dear son Edmund, Earl of Lancaster, with the *'domos, gardinum, placeas, et redditus cum pertinentiis suis'*," so runs the grant, once the property of her 'most dear Uncle' Peter, Count of Savoy."<sup>2</sup>

In 1351 Henry, the fourth Earl, was created first Duke of Lancaster, and in 1399, when Henry of Bolingbroke ascended the throne as Henry IV., he annexed the manor of the Savoy with all the other estates of the House of Lancaster to the Crown.

Stowe wrote of the Duke of Lancaster's house of the Savoy as being the "first in the realm in beauty and stateliness." After the battle of Poictiers, in 1356, it became the residence of the captive King John of France. He was released in 1360, but being

<sup>1</sup> Rev. J. Loftie, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid., Appendix A.*

unable to fulfil the conditions of his release, he voluntarily returned as prisoner, and died in the Savoy, 1364.

This palace, so full of reminiscences of history and romance, was reduced to ruins by the rebels under Wat Tyler, to show their vindictive sentiments towards the Duke of Lancaster for the protection he had afforded Wicliffe's followers from the rabble. The Savoy was never restored as a palace—it was rebuilt as a hospital dedicated to St. John the Baptist by Henry VII.; but finally, when Waterloo Bridge was built, that prosaic erection took the place of Peter of Savoy's palace, all remains of which were swept away. The church, still standing, alone marks the site of the palace, though it was built at a much later date, being the chapel of Henry VII.'s hospital, and not of the palace. Twice the chapel suffered from fire, and in the conflagration of 1864 the interior was entirely destroyed; but by the munificence of the late Queen Victoria, as Duchess of Lancaster, it was redecorated.<sup>1</sup> The new roof contains within quatrefoils fourteen shields of the royal persons connected with the manor. The first of the series bears the shield of Peter of Savoy, those of Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort terminate the suite.

Almost adjoining the estates of the Savoy, in Lincoln's Inn,<sup>2</sup> we find the Sardinian chapel as another memorial of the friendly terms existing

<sup>1</sup> Rev. J. Loftie, p. 82.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 241.

between the Court of Sardinia and the English Court. It is one of the oldest foundations now in the hands of Roman Catholics in London. On the arrival of the Sardinian Ambassador in 1713, the chapel was attached to his residence close by. Many Roman Catholics, who found it difficult to attend Mass owing to the constant religious disturbances during the reigns of the last Stuart kings, took advantage of the Ambassador's private chapel, and under his protection and connivance, were enabled to fulfil the obligations of their religion.

In the Gordon riots of 1780 the embassy and the chapel were greatly damaged and partly destroyed, and fervid Catholics witnessed with abhorrence a cat hung up over their chapel door dressed in priestly vestments with a holy wafer in its paw,<sup>1</sup> and similar unseemly acts of mockery.

The chapel, however, was restored after the wave of destruction had done its worst, and Mass is still celebrated there, as of old, on the opening of the Law Courts in October, when the dignitaries of the Bar attend in their robes of office before proceeding to the Halls of Justice.

The genial welcome bestowed by Henry III. on Count Peter of Savoy during his residence in England in the remote ages of the thirteenth century, a welcome extended to the subsequent representatives of Savoy, paved the way for more important and consecutive relations at a later date, when friendly

<sup>1</sup> *Walks in London*, vol. i. p. 120. A. J. C. Hare.

alliances between the two countries were of far greater political moment.

In order to have a clear conception of the conditions of Savoy at the time of Victor Amadeus' accession, the state of the country in the early days of formation, and her subsequent expansion after many generations of struggle, must be briefly considered.

The history of the House of Savoy, though pregnant with episodes relating to brilliant deeds of valour of her Princes, has to a great extent been neglected by students of events leading to the evolution of a country that attained great importance under adverse circumstances, and it is worthy of a larger field of general recognition.

At the time that the break-up of the Roman Empire altered the general conditions of the whole of Europe, the country comprising the two important towns of Vienna Allobrogium, the capital of the territory inhabited by the Allobroges between the Rhone and the Isère and Geneva, became familiar under the new name of Sapaudia, or Sabaudia.

This land was first annexed by the first King of Burgundy, and subsequently passed into the hands of Charles Martel, Pépin le Bref, and Charlemagne. The inhabitants of Sabaudia found themselves constantly forced to appeal to the French kings for aid against the Saracens, who by frequent incursions devastated the Rhone valley, and thus they formed obligations with France, which proved of serious inconvenience at a later period of history.

In 933 Provence was united to the kingdom of Burgundy and Sabaudia, as well as the episcopal territories of Belley and La Maurienne. Subsequent to the death of Rodolph III., King of Burgundy, who died childless, this now considerable possession was inherited by the Emperor of Germany, Conrad the Salic, as being next of kin to the late King.

This inheritance of Rodolph's provoked much jealousy amongst other relations, who urged equal claims. Foremost of these irritated claimants was his nephew, the Count of Blois and of Champagne. He tried in every way to obtain possession of this valuable heritage, and as he secured the support of many powerful vassals, there is little doubt he would have wrested the property from the rightful possessor had not Humbert, Count of Maurienne, come forward to assist the Emperor in his legitimate defence, and with this help enabled him to vanquish the invaders. Conrad, in order to show his gratitude to Humbert for his generous assistance, rewarded him in 1034 with the donation of the estate of Savoy, allowing him the enjoyment of the title of Count, and added to it the Duchy of Chablais.

The title of Count in the feudal laws of Burgundy implied ducal honours, and from the end of the tenth century the "comtés" or counties became the appanage of the relatives of the Emperor or King.

As time advanced the old name of Sabaudia was replaced by that of Savoja, which some authors affirm

to be derived from “*Salva via*,” or safe pass, owing to the comparative security of its roads at a time when all the other Alpine passes were infested with brigands. It was an estate situated in the heart of the Maritime Alps, extending to the arm of the Apennines that touched the Genoese coast, and was under the jurisdiction of the bishops of Grenoble.

Humbert Blanche-Main was born in 1003. Little is known concerning his history beyond the fact that he was of Burgundian origin, the son of William, Count of Burgundy, and great-grandson of Bérenger, the second King of Italy. He officiated as councillor to Ermengarde, the wife of Rodolph III., after this King's death.

Humbert's wife, Amélie, was sister of Queen Ermengarde; he consequently enjoyed almost a regal position at their Court. When he fought for Conrad he could boast of leading in his suite to battle Héribert, Archbishop of Milan, and Boniface, Duke of Tuscany.

Though the record of Humbert's brave deeds may not have been so fully recognised as those of some of his successors, his name will always live as the founder of the House of Savoy, and the autonomy and history of that country commences from the days of Humbert the first Count.

Through subsequent acquisition many well-known towns flourished in various parts of Humbert's domains, including Geneva, Chambéry, Embrun, Gap, Susa, Digne, Savona, Barcelonetta, Nice, Exilles,



*Photo, G. Brun, Aix-les-Bains*

THE OLD CHÂTEAU OF THE DUKES OF SAVOY AT CHAMBÉRY, TO WHICH HAS BEEN ADDED  
THE ACTUAL PRÉFECTURE



Glandèves, Vence, and Grasse. These towns were at a great distance from each other. This was a source of perpetual inconvenience in those days, as it led to continual raids by the owners of intervening territory. Humbert was not long in perceiving these annoyances, for on every side he was beset with dangers. The Dukes of Burgundy and the Princes of the House of Anjou left him but little peace. The Emperors of Germany, the Kings of France and Spain importuned him with every means in their power. Even the Pope had an eye on Humbert's advantageously situated lands, and looked upon him and his successors as rivals to be feared and foes to be crushed.<sup>1</sup>

The Princes of Savoy, notwithstanding reverses caused by the ill-will and envy of their neighbours, who noticed with feelings otherwise than friendly the steady progress being made by this hitherto unimportant state, advanced with rapid strides towards a prominent position. The unity of endeavours manifested by each succeeding prince to carry on the good works of his predecessor was largely responsible for this satisfactory result.

Humbert's son, Oddone, by his marriage with Adelaide, Marchesa di Susa and Contessa di Torino, added to the estate founded by his father, and Amédéo VI., known as "le Comte Vert," from the colours he wore at a tournament he held at Chambéry

<sup>1</sup> *Histoire de la Maison de Savoie*, p. 3, Belgiojoso. Calmann Levy, Paris, 1878.

about the year 1360, also contributed to the extension of his possessions through his alliance with Bonne de Bourbon, a cousin of Charles, the Dauphin of France, from whom he received a large addition of land. Amédéo VI. is chiefly remembered as being the founder of the Order of the Annunziata, on the origin of which so much has been written and said; and though many suggestions have been hazarded bearing on the subject, it may not perhaps be inappropriate to refer to the best-credited accounts on a page of old traditions, in connection with the institution of the Order. They are not devoid of a picturesque attraction, and reveal the mystic tendency that mingled with the practical conceptions of the knights of olden days.

It has never been positively ascertained if the creation of this Order by Amadeus VI. was consequent on an act of gallantry, or was symbolical of an incident of a religious nature.

The foundation for the last suggestion may possibly have been due to its establishment by Count Amadeus in the Carthusian monastery at Pierre-Châtel in Bugey. He created fifteen knights, and ordered that "fifteen Carthusian monks were to read Mass daily in honour of the fifteen joys of the Blessed Virgin and for the welfare of the fifteen knights. This order was only accessible to the high and ancient nobility of unblemished virtue and honour, nor was it permitted to wear it with any other decoration."

The following duties were entailed by the holders

of the Order, and by the honour conferred on them they undertook—

“1. To assist the Dukes of Savoy by word and deed on all occasions that their assistance was required and to protect the oppressed. 2. To wear constantly the collar or chain of the Order, which was composed alternately of love-knots and the letters F.E.R.T. 3. They were to present to the Church of Pierre-Châtel a chalice, surplice, and all other articles requisite for the celebration of Mass. 4. On their death they were to bequeath 100 livres for the support of that church. At funerals the whole community were to be present dressed originally in white, and later in black cloaks, which after the ceremony they handed over to the Carthusian monks; on all other occasions the colour of the cloak was crimson trimmed with fringes, and embroidered with love-knots.”<sup>1</sup>

Certain alterations were inaugurated by Charles III. of Savoy, in 1518, who gave the Order a new name, “the Holy Annunciation”; he also added fifteen enamelled roses, alternating with the word *Fert*, repeated fifteen times, conjoined by the girdle of St. Francis, as previously instituted by Amadeus VIII., in the collar, in place of the love-knots. Such is the collar which Philibert-le-Beau bears in the Church of Nôtre Dame at Brou (Bourg en Bresse), both on his tomb and in his likeness in the great window. This

<sup>1</sup> *The Book of Orders*, p. 250, B. Burke. Hurst and Blackett, 1858.

fine Gothic church was built between the years 1506-36 by Margaret of Austria, daughter of the Emperor Maximilian I., as a mausoleum for her second husband, Philibert, and herself. In the ornamentation round their tombs attention is attracted by the constant repetition of the words *Fortune*, *Infortune*, *Fort-Une*; they recur as frequently as the word *Fert*, and it is suggested that this epigram refers to the incidents of Margaret of Austria's life. As a child she had been promised in marriage to Charles VIII., King of France, and spent many years at the Court of his father, Louis XI., but this brilliant alliance was broken off for political reasons. She was next betrothed to John of Castile, the son of Ferdinand V., King of Aragon, and embarked for Spain for the celebration of her marriage. During the voyage a violent storm arose, the vessel menaced foundering, and the Princess, expecting to be drowned from one moment to another, fearing that her body should not be recognised, fastened a band on her arm, on which she had written—

“Ci git Margot, la gentil demoiselle,  
Qu'eut deux maris et mourût pucelle.”

Her presentiment of drowning was, however, not verified, and she married John of Castile, but he died within the year. In 1501 she became the wife of Philibert-le-Beau, Duke of Savoy. The mysterious motto may therefore signify the *Fortune* of her first brilliant engagement, the *Infortune* that

attended her marriage in Spain, and the *Fort-Une* that crowned her alliance with Philibert-le-Beau.

In 1620 Charles Emmanuel I. ceded Bresse and Bugey to Henri IV., and transferred the Order first to the Dominican church at Montmeilan, and thence to the hermitage of the Camaldoli monks in the mountains near Turin.<sup>1</sup> The costume of the knights has been frequently altered. At the present time the decoration is worn round the neck suspended by a sky-blue ribbon, accompanied by a star on the left side. When Victor Amadeus II. became King of Sardinia, he placed upon his head the regal crown and raised the "Order of the Annunciation" to the first rank of Orders in the kingdom. He abolished the limitation of numbers of the knights and awarded them the title of "eccellenza."<sup>2</sup> But the meaning of the word *Fert*, or the four initial letters, has not been clearly elucidated. Many interpretations have been suggested; the only one which seems really probable is that which appears on a gold piece struck in the reign of Victor Amadeus I., preserved in the

<sup>1</sup> Charles Emmanuel received the Marquisate of Saluzzo in exchange for Bresse and Bugey. Lesdiguières, Connétable de France, who had been chiefly instrumental in placing Henri IV. on the throne of France, highly disapproved of this exchange of territory. He considered that the gain of an estate of considerable value was badly compensated for by the loss of a footing in Italy, whereby the work of the King's predecessors was annulled, and expressed his disapproval of a proceeding derogatory to his master's fame in the following comment: "Le roi de France a fait une paix de marchand, et Monsieur de Savoie a fait une paix de roi" (*Anne d'Orléans*, p. 17, Faverges).

<sup>2</sup> Sir B. Burke, p. 250.

medal cabinet of the Kings of Sardinia—*FEDERE ET RELIGIONE TENEMUR* (“We are united by honour and religion”).<sup>1</sup>

A more applicable interpretation than this could not have been found. As we unroll the recording pages of the birth and growth of Savoy, her princes are revealed to us ever united by honour and religion in all that might conduce to the welfare of their country. Ever alert to duty's call, they were animated by that impulse only ; they participated this sentiment to their people, and under the banner of honour and religion they attained the summit for which they were bound.

The last of the Counts of Savoy was Amadeus VII., known under the name of “il Conte Rosso,”<sup>2</sup> and his son Amadeus VIII. was the first to enjoy the dignity of Dukedom conferred on the Princes of Savoy in the fifteenth century by Sigismund, Emperor of Luxembourg. In the patent drawn up as a mark of favour to the former Counts of Savoy, they are qualified as Dukes of Savoy and of Chablais, Marquises of Aosta and Italy, and Counts of Piedmont and Geneva.<sup>3</sup> All things considered, the Emperors of Germany were more dependable as allies than the Kings of France, or, at least, the Dukes of Savoy suffered less damage from inter-

<sup>1</sup> *Notes and Queries*, December 6th, 1902, 9th S.X.

<sup>2</sup> *Histoire de la Maison de Savoie*, p. 3, Belgiojoso. Calmann Levy, Paris, 1878.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53.

ference on the part of the Emperors. This was in great measure owing to the large number of fiefs in the north of Italy dependent on the Emperors, who, on their part, found it an advantage to be on friendly terms with their vassals.

Duke Amadeus VIII. added considerably to his estates, and reunited Piedmont to his Duchy, which for more than a century had passed out of the hands of his predecessors. He will always be remembered in history owing to the important part he played in the Council of Bâle in 1439, which led to his nomination as anti-Pope under the name of Felix V. Consequent on this act he renounced his rights to the Duchy, and passed the next ten years at Bâle ; but eventually, recognising his error, he obtained the Pope's pardon, by whom he was made Cardinal, and died in 1451 at Ripaille, on the Lake of Geneva, in the monastery he had founded for the Knights of the Order of St. Maurizio.

It would be a long and difficult process to give a detailed account of the endless raids and skirmishes that, besides the more important wars, led to perpetual change of towns and territory between Savoy and other countries. It would also be a tedious task to follow the political reasons of France that dictated her efforts to crush Savoy, except on the occasions when her services were judged of utility to the French nation.

In 1554, Philip II. of Spain, on the occasion of his visit to Windsor, shortly after his accession as

Sovereign, bestowed a special mark of favour on Emmanuel Philibert, the then reigning Duke of Savoy, and named him Knight of the Garter, the patent for which was drawn up in the following terms :—

“ Philip and Mary by the Grace of God, King and Queen of England, France, Naples, Hierusalem and Ireland etc. . . . as our entirely beloved cousin Emmanuel Philibert Duke of Savoy and Prince of Piemont, heretofore elected to be Knight and Commander of the said noble Order of the Garter, cannot conveniently repair to our castle of Windsor personally to be installed in the Collegiate Chapel of that Order, he has sent a right noble personage, Johan Thomas l’Angusta des Contes de Stropiane, authorised to be his deputy and proctor to receive his oath, etc.

“ 29th January, 1554.”<sup>1</sup>

It is generally supposed that the bestowal of the Order on Emmanuel Philibert was connected with the wish of Philip that he should marry Elizabeth, and that the honour was intended to encourage him in his suit. The idea seems to have been mooted by Paget,<sup>2</sup> who was in great favour with Philip, and was approved of both by the latter and the Emperor. Possibly Philip may have induced Mary to bestow the Garter without owning his ulterior motives ; they

<sup>1</sup> *The Order of the Garter*, E. Ashmole.

<sup>2</sup> William Paget, first Baron Paget of Beaudesert (1505–63), Secretary of State in the reign of Henry VIII., and one of the King’s chief advisers.

might not have met with her approval, as the marriage would have implied the recognition of Elizabeth's legitimacy, for it is well known that Mary never recognised Elizabeth as her sister, nor would she admit she was Henry the Eighth's daughter.<sup>1</sup>

Emmanuel Philibert had been compelled to sign a treaty with Switzerland, in which he renounced all claim on Geneva, but no sooner did Philibert die than his son Charles Emmanuel I., who succeeded him, wished to establish his authority and reassert his rights. He carried his ambitions so far that not content with putting in his claim for Geneva, he proceeded to announce his intention to assert his rights to the thrones of Cyprus and Portugal.

Some justification could be admitted to both these pretensions. Cyprus had been left to Savoy by Charlotte of Lusignan, Queen of Cyprus and Jerusalem in her own right. She had married the second son of Ludovic, Duke of Savoy, and on her death, in 1487, she left her kingdoms to the House of Savoy. Unfortunately Charlotte and her husband had been deposed by an illegitimate son of the late King of Cyprus; therefore the legal claim of title to King had been the only advantage of Charlotte's legacy to the House of Savoy. The title was borne by all the Princes of Savoy till 1861, the year the kingdom of Italy was proclaimed.

In regard to Portugal, Charles Emmanuel bore in

<sup>1</sup> *The Life of Jane Dormer, Duchess of Feria* (1675), edited by Rev. J. Stevenson, 1887.

mind that his father Philibert had been warmly urged by the Portuguese nation to accept the throne on the plea that he bore the same degree of parentage as Philip II., the claimant to the crown of Portugal, but enjoyed a far larger share of popularity.

Charles Emmanuel I., Duke of Savoy, so justly renowned for his brave deeds and successful career, is still remembered in Geneva by the *fête* held there annually to celebrate the historical episode of the “escalade” in 1588, on which occasion the Duke unfortunately failed to add to his brilliant record.

## CHAPTER III

### THE BIRTH OF VICTOR AMADEUS

The increasing importance of Savoy—The correspondence between Charles II. and Charles Emmanuel—The Duke's marriage with Mademoiselle de Nemours—Birth of Victor Amadeus, 1666—The boy's delicacy—His great precocity—His disposition—Description of the Court of Turin—Death of Charles Emmanuel—The Duchess named Regent.

THE slight sketch in the preceding chapter illustrating the unflinching will of the Savoy princes to overcome the difficulties with which they had to contend reaches over the early years of building up the House, and attention may now be turned to the relations between the Courts of England and Savoy during the last years of Charles Emmanuel's reign, the second Duke of that name, preparatory to the subsequent events on the accession of Victor Amadeus his son.

The uninterrupted correspondence preserved in the Record Office enables it to be realised the friendship that existed between Charles II. and the Duke of Savoy. The correspondence is full of interesting material, and brings into notice the intimacy that for a long time had reigned between the two Houses. The most trifling details regarding the Court of Savoy were reported to Charles either in personally

addressed letters from the Duke or from the English envoy, and are both instructive and amusing. The relationship between the Duke and Charles II. was tolerably near, as Henrietta Maria, the King's mother, and Christine, the mother of Charles Emmanuel, were both daughters of Henri IV. of France and Marie de Medici.

The interest evinced by the two Courts in their mutual affairs is seen by the following letters, the first of which is from the Duke to the King relating to his first wife's death, a preparatory step to the announcement of his second marriage.

“ **MONSIEUR**,—Your Majesty has always shown me so much consideration that I have but little doubt your Majesty will sympathise with me in this moment of deep affliction on the death of Madame my mother and Madame my wife, who died within three weeks of each other. I have deputed the Count of Ricaldon to request an audience in order to acquaint your Majesty of what has taken place and to give my assurances of dutiful regard, of which I shall bear testimony to the end of my days. Until that moment I shall be, **Monseigneur**, your Majesty's very humble and affectionate cousin and servant,

“ **C. EMMANUEL.**

“ From **TURIN**, *January 14th, 1664.*

“ To the King of Great Britain.”<sup>1</sup>

This letter to Charles II. was supplemented by one from the Duke's sister, Princess Louise of Savoy,

<sup>1</sup> Savoy and Sardinia, folios 24, 25. Record Office.



MARIE-JEANNE-BAPTISTE DE SAVOYE  
Duchesse de Savoie, Princesse de Piedmont, Reyne de Cypre  
THE REGENT  
*From a print in the King's Library, Turin*



who in a quaint wording of the superscription, also wrote to “the King of Great Britain upon y<sup>e</sup> death of y<sup>e</sup> Dutches her mother and also of her sister who did both dye w<sup>th</sup>in three weeks of one of another.” Turin, February, 166 $\frac{3}{4}$ .

Charles Emmanuel II. had first married Françoise de Bourbon, a niece of Louis XIV. She died childless soon after her marriage, and though the Duke was averse to second alliances on principle, he considered that in this case, as he had no brothers to succeed him, he must put personal inclination on one side, and accordingly in order to secure the succession a marriage was arranged with his cousin, Jeanne de Savoie Nemours, an alliance that gave universal satisfaction in Savoy and Piedmont. The bride brought him as her marriage portion the provinces of Génevois, Faucigny, and Beaufort. The old castle belonging to the Dukes of Génevois Nemours still commands the little town of Annecy. It dates from the fourteenth century, and many a time did its massive keeps and battlements defy the aggressive attacks of the French, till the day that mercenary interests triumphed over patriotism, and the castle of the Nemours passed into the hands of France.<sup>1</sup>

Jeanne de Savoie Nemours and the Queen of Portugal were daughters of Charles Amadeus of Savoy, Duke of Nemours. Their father was killed in a duel with his brother-in-law the Duke of

<sup>1</sup> “Aix-les-Bains and Annecy,” Lord Lamington, *Nineteenth Century*, August, 1883.

Beaufort in 1652 during the troubles of the Fronde.

Charles Emmanuel's second marriage was by no means favourably viewed by France. During the reign of Francis I. the Comte de Génevois, the head of the House of Génevois, had been lured to France by the King to enable him to have complete control of the Alpine confines. In recognition of the Count's ready compliance with the French King's demands, the Duchies of Nemours and d'Aumale were bestowed on the Count. It was therefore with ill-concealed annoyance that France saw the diplomacy of Francis I. annulled through the marriage of Jeanne de Savoie Nemours with her cousin, by which the border provinces of Génevois, Faucigny, and Beaufort passed back into the hands of the Dukes of Savoy.<sup>1</sup>

Within the year following his marriage, on May 14th, 1666, Charles Emmanuel was able to acquaint the King of the birth of the wished-for heir, and assured beforehand of felicitations on the part of Charles II. on this event, he wrote to him as follows :—

“ I humbly present my duty to your Majesty and with extreme joy I wish to inform him that it has pleased God this morning to safely deliver Madame my wife of a son. I humbly request that your Majesty may receive Count Philibert of Piocasque, Madame's first equerry, the bearer of this news, and I have bid him assure your Majesty that no one

<sup>1</sup> *Anne d'Orléans, Reine de Sardaigne*, p. 17, Comtesse de Faverges. A. Savaète, Editeur, Paris.

more than I wish for the continuation of his good graces.

“Your very humble and affectionate cousin and servant,

“C. EMMANUEL.

“TURIN, 14<sup>th</sup> May, 1666.”

The rejoicings that followed on the announced birth of a son and heir to the dukedom, who was baptised under the names of Victor Amadeus, were partly damped on the news spreading of the child's extreme delicacy.

So frail was he and of such a weak constitution that his early years inspired great anxiety, and during his first months of infancy grave fears were entertained that his life was in imminent danger. This would have been all the more serious for the country, as Duke Charles had entered into a second marriage with the sole object of leaving an heir to the dukedom.

All the most eminent physicians of Europe were consulted in turn, but their contradictory opinions, and employment of drugs as varying as their opinions, only aggravated the distressing symptoms, which seemed to point to a disastrous end.

The avoidance of a fatal result was entirely due to his mother. She impatiently sent the celebrated medicos about their business, and replaced them by a village doctor in whom she had confidence, Petéchia by name. He at once abolished all the remedies hitherto employed, and suggested that the boy should

be brought up on the light biscuits or "grissini," a speciality of Piedmontese bakeries. To this very simple prescription, and the frugal fare insisted on by the humble village doctor, Victor Amadeus is generally credited to have owed his life.<sup>1</sup>

The alarm felt during the first critical months of his existence having to a certain extent subsided, early attention was called to the boy's remarkable intelligence. It was impossible not to notice pronounced traces of a character of exceptional claims to interest.

Unfortunately his mother, though constantly pre-occupied as to her son's health, was in no way fitted to develop his moral qualities, or raise the standard of a nature that required a most judicious mode of treatment, and the tact of a woman of much finer perceptions.

Madame Royale, whose tenure of conduct was ruled by ambition and the love of power, not only led to the development of the boy's failings, but was equally incapable of tending to the expansion of his many good traits.

The pronounced self-will and obstinacy of which he gave proofs as soon as he was capable of showing his insistence on anything he intended to have, were allowed to develop for the want of some sensible person to look after him, who instead of perpetually using threats, would doubtless have employed more successful means of modifying his arbitrary nature.

<sup>1</sup> *Mémoires Historiques sur la Maison royale de Savoie*, Costa de Beauregard, Appendix I., tome iii. Turin, 1816.

As the years passed, the state of perpetual rebellion in which Victor Amadeus found himself with his mother increased instead of diminished, and she, in her misapplied endeavours to curb his will, rather helped to encourage than to discourage him in his faults.

Many tales are related of the boy's unusual precocity, and his extraordinary passion for soldiers was noticed at a very early age.

In 1671 Chapuzeau, a former tutor of the Prince of Orange, was travelling in Italy, and having occasion to visit Charles Emmanuel's Court, his attention was drawn to the boy. Chapuzeau notes in his *Mémoires* the impression made on him by Victor Amadeus, who, at the age of five, the first time he saw the tutor, eagerly asked him whether he had seen his regiment, and to Chapuzeau's further surprise, took no part in childish games suited to his age, but was absolutely absorbed in the military. He had been promised that the day the Bishop of Laon, who was daily expected at Turin, should enter the town, he would be permitted to meet him at the head of his regiment, and Chapuzeau said no one could fail to be struck by the boy's gravity and dignity of mien with which he headed his troops on that day so impatiently longed for.

With such a precocious child it can well be understood that Madame Royale's training was most ill-advised. Instead of encouraging and interesting herself in the studies most suitable to such pronounced

youthful individuality, she, on the contrary, guided by a presentiment of jealousy that Victor Amadeus would some day be a hindrance to her own ambitions, surrounded him with masters and tutors the least adapted to forward his education.

Not being sufficiently intelligent herself to reason that such marked intuition and perspicacity could not be crushed out of the boy without serious results, she blindly imagined that by keeping him ignorant of the duties of his calling he would remain for an indefinite period of time under her complete control.

In order to evolve the scheme she had devised to gratify her selfish ends, she brought him up to fear her, and sought in no ways to win his affection. She argued to herself that in showing her indifference and keeping aloof, she would gain the more complete mastery over his personal tendency to independence. She therefore only saw her son once a day for a few minutes, and even then this daily visit could hardly be considered in the light of a mother's meeting with her only child, for it never took place in private, but in the presence of the suite, and therefore assumed the character of an audience.

Charles Emmanuel was devotedly attached to the boy, and showed him the affection that was lacking on Madame Royale's part. It was not expected of the Duke, nor had he sufficient leisure, to give his individual attention to a child barely out of the nursery ; and he probably was still less inclined to interfere in the arrangements that naturally devolved

on the mother, as there was but little sympathy between the Duke and his wife, the marriage showing no signs of having been actuated by affection.<sup>1</sup>

In the following letter from the Minister at Turin we are given a résumé of Charles Emmanuel's disposition, and are enabled to judge that it was a practical step on the Duke's part to combine an alliance with his cousin, in order to secure the succession, and was a marriage of convenience rather than of any reciprocity of sentiment. The Minister, referring to the Duke, says :—

“ He hath bien twice marryed, first in Anno 1663 to Mademoiselle de Valois daughter to the Duke of Orleans his mother's brother. But she dyed before the end of that year, as did his mother also viz. 23 Xber, 1663. Before two years of mourning for his Duchess and mother had expired, he marryed to his second wife Maria Joanna Baptista de Savoy, commonly called Mademoiselle de Nemours unto whom he must have payd a large dower had he not marryed her shee being a Princess of his own family. Shee is twenty six years old and hath only one child a sonn born the 14 May 1666, so that the same day this present year 1670 the young Prince will bee 5 years old. This Duke is exceedingly like the King of France only his hayr and complexion are a little blacker. The Duchess is not much unlike the present Queen of France and the young Prince dooth much

<sup>1</sup> *La Comtesse de Verrue et la Cour de Victor-Amédée II. de Savoie*, par G. de Léris. Paris, 1881.

ressemble the Dauphin in as much as not only myself, but many others have binn deceived with the sight of their pictures, as taking one for the other. The Duke is vigorous, lively, active, generous, liberal, amorous. A great lover of stately building and rich furniture, nor doth he spare any expense to accomplish his pleasures, witnesse his Pallace at La Vénerie built in all perfection in a mountain of ill access and incapable of any inlargement of gardens, courts, park woods, without removing hills and raysing of vales w<sup>ch</sup> he hath finished. But above all things he loves hunting and at that exercise hath had miraculous escapes. Once his horse fell with him into a pool of very deep water where he had binn drowned had not his horse binn very strong and he himself very dexterous. Another time having hunted a stagg at a bay he adventured at y<sup>e</sup> stagg w<sup>th</sup> his sword. The stagg turned head and gored his horse. The horse being high mettled threw him between the stagg's horns, yet he had noe hurt but the horse was killed. The Princess Loyse who is the Duke's sister may have some forty years of age, her face and person rather masculine than feminine. The women here succeed not in y<sup>e</sup> inheritance of y<sup>e</sup> House, in private affairs they doe. The next in blood is il Principe di Carignano who is dumb and is sonn to Principe Tomaso brother to y<sup>e</sup> present Duke's father. Principe Tomaso dyed 8 or nine years since in this place. His second sonn is Principe Eugenio Comte de Soissons who is still living at Paris and marryed Madame Mancini Cardinal Mazarin's niece by whom he hath several children. The oldest is called il Cavaliere di

Savoya, the second il Conte da Dreux, the one of them about 9, the other 7 years old both heer w<sup>th</sup> their Unkle il Principe Philiberto da Carignano. Besides those two young Princes who probably will succeed in this house in case the young Prince of Piedmont should chance to dye, the Principe Eugenio Conte de Soissons, their father, hath many other children and is in a fayr way of increasing them."

*Account of the Family of the Duke of Savoy.*  
*Anno 1670*<sup>1</sup>

There is much curious reading in the letters from various residents in Turin to correspondents in England, and though owing to frequent absence of signature it is not always possible to identify the writers of the letters, yet they were all more or less connected with the Court in official capacities, and enable those interested in the research to glean both social and political information in connection with the two Courts. The preceding letter gives some description of the Duke and his family, and in the following extract is to be found "an account of the principal persons of Savoy in the year 1670." Many of the names to whom reference is made will occur in subsequent pages as playing important rôles in the Duke's Council, and assist in a better acquaintance-ship with some of the prominent personages of Charles Emmanuel's Court.

<sup>1</sup> Savoy and Sardinia. Record Office.

After speaking of many matters relating to the Court, the letter proceeds to say :—

“ In the first place, wee must begin with him who is in greatest credit, and this is General Truchi, c'est à dire Général de finances de S.A.R. a man of elevated parts though but of mean condition and extraction. He is incomparably the greatest in office, in esteeme, in veneration, of any one heer. His father a plowman, very many of his relations exceeding poor, nor worth a cow or pigg. He is fifty years old, yet seems not to be above thirty-five ; is tall, strayt, of black hair, yet an indifferent fayr complexion, much addicted to look into matters of trade and commerce. He is marryed, but hath no children, his lady thirty-five years old, the daughter of a private gentleman, but one that was very rich.

“ The next in business is the Marquis de St. Thomas, ministro e primo segretario di Stato di S.A.R.” (Minister and First Secretary of State to H.R.H.). “ He is about sixty years of age, of a pale, melancholy complexion, subject to catarrhs, colds, and rheums. I cannot penetrate into him so as to find any great depth in him. He is rich and covetous. His eldest sonn, the Conte de Busilione, is also primiero Secretario d'Etat, and is at all Counsells, so that this charge is in a way of being hereditarie.

“ The Marquis de Pianesse was heretofore chief Minister and all men applyed themselves to him in such matters wherein they would not trouble his R.H., but, since he has quitted the world and retyred in a religious house to lead a private lyfe, public ministers

doo no longer address themselves to him, though he is still very often called upon to assist and be present at the Councell.

“The Chancellor and Archbishop of Turin are of the Council but in no great esteem more than w<sup>ht</sup> the dignity of their places requires.

“These are the most considerable if not the only ones, who negotiate matters of business in this Court.”<sup>1</sup>

In January, 1671, a discussion arose on the question of privileges accorded to the Envoy of the Court of Savoy in London.

Charles Emmanuel was very tenacious of his position at the Court of St. James, and on hearing that the Envoy to the Court of Tuscany had been granted prerogatives denied to his Minister in London, the Marquis de St. Thomas was instructed to write to Lord Arlington on the matter. The first ground for complaint referred to the recent bestowal of the name of “brother” on the Duke of Tuscany in all the despatches that passed between Charles II. and the Court of Tuscany. This innovation raised a strong feeling of jealousy or resentment at an apparent slight to the House of Savoy, on which subject the Marquis de St. Thomas wrote to Lord Arlington confidentially as follows :—

“The Comte de Mourouz has returned from England and given me a substantial report on his voyage

<sup>1</sup> Record Office, folio 25.

there. I cannot avoid acquainting y<sup>r</sup> Excell: that great surprise is felt here that the King of Great Britain has quite lately addressed the Duke of Tuscany as 'brother,' though by His Most Christian Majesty he is only treated as 'cousin.' The Duke of Tuscany has never dared demand a favour from France; that country is also anxious that H.R.H. should not enjoy that which he has a right to claim. The late King of Great Britain accorded him the necessary privileges. H.R.H. therefore could not be satisfied if he was only to be treated on the same footing as the Duke of Tuscany; H.R.H. hopes for still greater courtesy from His Majesty of Great Britain and trusts he will not retract from the example given him by the late King his father. He has the honour to be very near him in blood and parentage, and I feel I may add he is not less united to him by zeal, inclination and duty. . . ."

The remainder of the letter is occupied on the question of privileges granted to the Envoy, and the Minister continues:—

"As it has pleased Y<sup>r</sup> Excell: to mention to Count Mourouz that our Ambassador would receive the same concessions at the Court of St. James as those accorded to the Embassies to crowned heads, I humbly request Y<sup>r</sup> Excell: to inform me if that clause has been inserted in the official registers. I feel I may claim the ratification of this promise, as Y<sup>r</sup> Excell: knows that it is a very long time since H.R.H. remitted his papers to Milord Fauconberg, and being informed that he has arrived in England, I am

writing him a few words to advise him to speak to Y<sup>r</sup> Excell.”<sup>1</sup>

These preoccupations on the part of the Duke and his ministers were easily dispersed, the replies from England were most reassuring, and there was no lessening of cordiality between the two Courts.

In May, 1671, there was an interchange of personal letters between the Duke, Princess Louise of Savoie, the Duchess, and Charles II., who all wrote to the King to offer their condolences on the death of Anne Hyde, Duchess of York. Charles Emmanuel expressed himself to the King in the following terms :—

“ The interest I feel in all that concerns Y<sup>r</sup> Majesty induces me to assure him that no one has been more sincerely affected than myself, on the loss he has sustained by the death of his sister Madame the Duchess of York. The notification it has pleased Y<sup>r</sup> Majesty to send me on the sad event increases my sentiments of obligation and gratitude. I wish I could give better proofs by my actions rather than in these lines in order to persuade Y<sup>r</sup> Majesty that never shall I waver in my earnest desire to remain till the end of my life your very humble and affectionate

“cousin and servant,

“CH. EMMANUEL.”<sup>2</sup>

The next letter is from Mr. Croker, a British resident at Turin, addressed to “Mr. Henry Smith, at Queen’s College in Oxford.” It is referred to

<sup>1</sup> Record Office, folio 25.

<sup>2</sup> Record Office.

here because it furnishes further details on Charles Emmanuel's Court, and he also speaks of one of the endless small wars from which Savoy was never free. The war referred to was due to quarrels that had arisen between Piedmontese and Ligurian peasants on a question of frontier. In the following letter Charles Emmanuel is criticised on the part he took in the affair.

*"Oct. 28th, 1672.*

"This Duke has no favorite or Prime Minister, Signor Giovanni Rossi is Secretary of State. This Court is the jolliest of any of Italy but now is desolate all y<sup>e</sup> nobility being at y<sup>e</sup> warre. The occasion of y<sup>e</sup> warre on the Duke's part I think not very just. There hath been for many years grudges and animosities between y<sup>e</sup> Genoese and the Duke, as is generally between confining States. The Duke by y<sup>e</sup> means of one Raphael di Torre, a banished gentleman of Genoa for his crimes had a correspondent in Savona and had sent fifty stout men unto y<sup>e</sup> town who had nailed y<sup>e</sup> cannon, and y<sup>e</sup> gates were left open till midnight for 2,000 men to enter ; but y<sup>e</sup> Marquesse Livorno who commanded, being a young, inexperienced man, y<sup>e</sup> Count de Catalini, an old soldier, was joined to him, but he was not acquainted with y<sup>e</sup> designe till they ware ready to goe to y<sup>e</sup> action when he scrupled, except he had orders from the Duke. This caused a difference between them, and a great raine falling, the watters being out in y<sup>e</sup> passages of y<sup>e</sup> mountaines, was the occasion the designe tooke not effect. After y<sup>e</sup> Duke to color the

thing y<sup>e</sup> world should not think in time of peice he would surprise unjustly, pretended other small quarrels betwixt the country people was y<sup>e</sup> reason. The Genoese in the beginning of y<sup>e</sup> warre had much great advantage having killed and taken prisoners many persons of quality, and tooke Onellia, a town in the riviera from Savoy ; but of late y<sup>e</sup> Duke hath had better successe, he took Zuoy (?), a town of y<sup>e</sup> Genoese, and hath recovered Onellia deserted by them, on purpose to come to an adjustment, for now having something recovered by honor, he is in equall termes. Monseigneur Gaumont arrived here yesterday from Genoa and its expected a suspension of arms will soon bee. In y<sup>e</sup> interim, Don Gabriele, bastard, Uncle to y<sup>e</sup> Duke and Generall, harrases y<sup>e</sup> country of Genoa. This Duke hath been a great Servant to y<sup>e</sup> ladies, but now is reformed, at present having no Mistresse. He has only one Sonne, nor is like to have other children, y<sup>e</sup> Duchess by a miscarriage they say, being rendered incapable."

A postscript is added to the above letter :—

“ This day is declared y<sup>e</sup> suspension of arms between the Duke and y<sup>e</sup> Genoese.”

These authentic chronicles, by drawing attention to the incessant raids and petty wars that seemed to arise on the smallest provocation, serve to show the difficulties experienced by Savoy in making a start, for though not of great importance in themselves, they impeded the progress of the country and impoverished her resources.

Mr. Croker's opinion that the Court of Turin was "the jolliest in Italy" was fully confirmed by other strangers who had the honour of accepting the amiable hospitalities dispensed by the Duke and Duchess ; but all festivities and entertainments were suddenly postponed and abruptly interrupted by the totally unexpected illness of Charles Emmanuel, terminating in his death at the early age of forty-one. It was generally considered due to a shock consequent on an accident that befell his son Victor Amadeus, before his eyes. During the periodical respites from fever to which Charles Emmanuel finally succumbed, it distressed him to know that he was leaving his son to the disadvantages entailed by a long minority. The same misfortune had befallen himself, and Duke Charles was well aware how baneful had been the results on his character and consequently on his destiny, owing to the long authority exercised over him by his mother Christine, Henrietta Maria's sister. The conflicting sentiments of filial attachment by which the negotiations of political affairs were often left in his mother's hands clashed with the stronger instinct of duty to which he had been called ; and, with pangs of remorse, he accused himself of repeated neglect in the charges entrusted to him, through deference to the maternal will by which he was overweighted.

Though the care of Victor Amadeus had devolved on his mother during his years of boyhood, and Charles Emmanuel had only exercised his authority



From a print in

the King's Library, Turin

VICTOR AMADEUS AT THE AGE OF NINE



as father when necessity compelled him, he was well aware of the total absence of harmony between the Duchess and her son. It was impossible for Charles Emmanuel not to observe the constant friction caused by the marked disinclination of the boy to be under her orders, and the consequent complaints of the Duchess at his wilful, unpliant nature.

These thoughts were most distressing to the dying Duke, and as the hour of his premature death approached, he fell a prey to the dire prospects regarding his son's minority. In order to remedy a position that perforce had to be accepted, the Duke dedicated his last moments to a careful consideration as to the most advisable men to whom he could conscientiously entrust the mission of assisting Madame Jeanne Baptiste in the responsibilities of her guardianship.

After mature thought and calm decision, he elected that the Council of Trustees should be composed of the Archbishop of Turin, the Chancellor Buschetti, the Marquis du Bourg, l'Abbé d'Aglié, the President Truchi (Minister of Finances, and, as has been previously mentioned, a great favourite of the Duke's), the Marquis de St. Maurice, and Don Gabriel, his uncle, a natural son of Charles Emmanuel I.

Don Gabriel was an old and valiant soldier, but an indifferent general ; he was chiefly distinguished for his sound judgment on ordinary occasions and his affable nature, and was most suited for the responsibility conferred on him by the Duke, whereas the choice of the Marquis de St. Maurice was not free from

criticism, as in spite of Madame's efforts to keep it a mystery, it was whispered that she was not entirely indifferent to the admiration shown to her by St. Maurice. To everyone save herself he was most unpopular, and had the reputation of being of an overbearing and cruel nature.

Perhaps Madame Royale considered that a tendency to light conduct on her part might be to some extent condoned by her husband's numerous instances of neglect towards her, and his constant infidelities may have led her to be less scrupulous in her own actions. Her conduct, which try as she would to keep concealed, could not be otherwise than known to Charles Emmanuel, was another reason to account for his anxiety as a father in regard of his son's future, for like all the Savoy princes, whatever might be their personal failings and shortcomings, they were loyal in their duties towards their subjects, and one and all showed unanimity in their wish to improve the position and welfare of their dukedom. Charles Emmanuel's death took place soon after he had made the necessary dispositions, on June 12th, 1675, and Jeanne de Savoie assumed the office of Regent.

The Duke's death seemed the realisation of all her ambitions. She had always resented that during his lifetime he had kept her ignorant of all political affairs, and nurtured a feeling of bitterness that she had never occupied the position of his confidante, as she would have wished ; now, therefore, she intended to reign according to her own proclivities, and deter-

mined forthwith to assert the authority that she felt she had been forced to control for too long a time.

The only drawback to this promising vista arose through the insecure foundation on which she had based her calculations, and she had not sufficiently taken into account the exceptionally tenacious nature of her intelligent son.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE REGENCY

Friendly dispositions of Charles II. towards Savoy—The intrigues of Madame Royale—The Portuguese marriage—Annoyances caused by France—The fort of Pinerolo—Exchange of despatches between the Courts of St. James and Turin on a question of etiquette—The refusal of Victor Amadeus to contemplate marriage with the Infanta—Indignation of Madame Royale—Her disputes with her son—Intrigues against Madame Royale—She keeps Louvois informed on her son's occupations—Her intimacy with Count Masino—Louis XIV. decides on the Duke's marriage—Victor Amadeus decides to close the Regency—Traits of Madame Royale's character—The embellishments of the town under her direction.

THE death of Charles Emmanuel led to no alteration in Charles the Second's line of policy with the House of Savoy, and on receiving the announcement of the Duke's demise, he sent his envoys to Turin to convey to Madame Royale the expression of his condolences. An official letter, written on this occasion, and conveyed by special envoys, gives evidence of Charles the Second's sincere desire to maintain the same friendly relations with the young Prince as had reigned between the late Duke and himself. These courtesies on the part of the King were greatly appreciated by Madame Royale and her son, and they spared no pains to show the English envoys all the

distinction possible. An extract taken from a letter referring to their arrival, tells us that—

“ Comte de Scaravel, the Master of the Ceremonies, received His Majestie’s and Royall Highnesses Envoyes and took them to distinct lodgings provided for them ; Mr. Grenville to a house of pleasure built by the late Duke, and Colonel Churchill to the controleur Gnåll of the household where they are entertained at the Duchess’s charge and attended by the Officers of State. Between seven and eight of the clock this evening they were received by Madame Royale with great demonstration of respect and kindness. They were the next day introduced in like manner to the Princess Louise and the Prince de Carignan ; yesterday to Don Gabriel de Savoy, the Marquis de St. Thomas, and the Marquis de Ronin, who is of the blood ; all which were particularly affected with the sense His Majesty of Great Brittaine has of their great losse and with the honor he has done them in sending to condole with them on y<sup>e</sup> occasione.

“ TURIN, 28 September, 1675.”<sup>1</sup>

These acts of courtesy and respect on the part of Charles II. were followed at a later date by an official declaration of public recognition of the obligations that bound him to the Duke of Savoy, couched in the following terms :—

“ Instructions for our trusty and well beloved William Soame Esq<sup>r</sup> our Envoy Extraord<sup>y</sup> to the Duke of Savoy. You shall with all speed begin

<sup>1</sup> Record Office. Savoy and Sardinia, folio 25.

and continue your voyage to Turin in Piemont, where being arrived you shall demand an audience of the said Duke of Savoy and of his Mother the Dutchesse Regent wherein you shall in the most effectuall termes expresse our perfect friendship with, and particular affection to, that Prince, endearing the same with those circumstances of consanguinity and near alliance that is between us. You shall also declare unto the Dutchesse the great esteeme wee have for her person, virtues, and prudence, and how kindly wee take her late sending of Comte St. Maurice unto our Court as an essay of that amity which wee heartily embrase and shall by all means endeavour to continue and improve. The like compliment of our esteeme and good will you shall also make to the Princess Louyse."

After this greeting of affectionate wishes to the young Duke, who at the early age of eleven was thus initiated into the duties attendant on official life, the declaration proceeded to state "wee are satisfyed with the Treaty of Commerce made by Sir John Finch [then our resident in Florence] betweene us and the late Duke of Savoy, assuring them that wee on our part shall be wanting in nothing that may confirm and increase a good understanding betweene us," and so on. The long document then closes with an appeal for the Duke's subjects who make profession of the reformed religion, saying—

"If any of them make application to you to intrude on their behalves for favour and mitigation you shall

doe them all the good offices you can with the Dutchesse and her Ministers that they may quietly enjoy such liberties and immunities as have been anciently granted unto them.

“ Given at our Court at Whitehall the 4th day of November 1677, in the nine and twentieth yeare of our reigne.

“ Signed. C. R.”

While this interchange of compliments gave evidence to the harmony reigning between the two courts, the home life at Turin was far from being as peaceable. It was a regrettable fact that from the day of Charles Emmanuel’s death the antagonism that had been unconsciously increasing between mother and son became far more acute.

Jeanne de Savoie, though by no means a woman of marked intelligence, was nevertheless keenly alive to the most advantageous means of enjoying as far as she could the privileges of her influential position ; and the Duke’s constitutional weakness, out of which he had not entirely grown, furnished a legitimate plea to keep him as ignorant as it was in her power from all knowledge of affairs.

But imperative and arbitrary as Madame Royale was in her decisions, her son of eleven proved to be more than her equal in stubborn resistance, evidence of which was soon to be put to the test.

Jeanne de Savoie’s errors of judgment were not confined to those concerning his education, and one of her ill-advised steps was to encourage the strong feeling in Turin against France, and all those who

shared her duties as Regent were equally remarkable for their extreme aversion to the French. This apparent dislike to France was by no means a genuine sentiment, and while Madame Royale openly fostered the unfriendly feelings for which she was responsible, privately she connived with the French Government, and the following chapters will prove how ready she was to furnish Louis XIV. with Cabinet secrets. Her duplicity constituted a serious danger, as Savoy was not prepared at that period of history to throw off all consideration for France.<sup>1</sup>

In all previous minorities the Piedmontese had divided into two parties, one for, and the other against the French, and never was the party guided by antipathy to France in greater favour at Court than during Jeanne's regency.

The Duke, still under the influence of his mother, was not exempt from his share in aggressive sentiments towards the French, and contributed to this dangerous move. The disposition of hostility was further encouraged by his tutor, Count Provana de Bruin, the Principe de la Cisterna, and other gentlemen of his personal suite, many of whom found it to their interests to second the Regent's policy.<sup>2</sup>

Had Madame Royale controlled her love of power and been content to live peaceably with her son, she might have enjoyed, without opposition, the position

<sup>1</sup> *La Maison de Savoie*, p. 250, Belgiojoso.

<sup>2</sup> *Mémoires sur la Maison de Savoie*, tome iii. p. 28, C. de Beauregard.

she so highly prized ; but her love of intrigue and the unconquerable jealousy by which she allowed herself to be carried away, led her to forget all prudence, and she herself was alone responsible for the turn of events prejudicial to her own interests.

In 1677 Madame Royale commenced a secret correspondence with her sister, the Queen of Portugal, on the subject of a proposed alliance between her son and the Infanta Isabella, the only child of Don Pedro of Braganza, King of Portugal, and heiress to the throne.

There was one serious obstacle that stood in the way of these negotiations, due to an inviolable law of Portuguese statutes, by which any Infanta who was heiress to the throne was prohibited from marrying a prince of another country ; but Madame Royale was not so easily discouraged in an affair of such importance to herself, and with the help of her ministers was able to override this objection by proving that the Duke of Savoy descended in direct lineage from Emmanuel Philibert, who in 1580 was called to the throne of Portugal by the unanimous wish of the people. Consequently she did not consider her son in the light of a foreign prince. It was true that Emmanuel Philibert had been offered the throne, it had been represented to him that he had the same rights as Philip II., King of Spain, and the country earnestly begged him to consent to the proposal. The Duke foresaw that were he to accept, disagreeable passages might be entailed with the Court of Austria ; therefore, while gratefully acknowledging

the compliment paid him, he wisely withdrew from the ranks as claimant, but all the same he retained the affection and esteem of the Portuguese.<sup>1</sup>

This important difficulty having apparently been satisfactorily set on one side, the two sisters continued their secret negotiations. Madame Royale went as far as to undertake to promise that the Duke would inhabit Lisbon, and in order to accelerate the completion of the transaction twelve Portuguese vessels, under the command of the Duc de Cadoval, were under orders to be in readiness to sail for Nice for the purpose of conveying the Duke to Portugal.

Previous to arriving at this advanced stage of proceedings France had not lost sight of Madame Royale's intrigues, all of which were reported by the French Ambassador in Turin to the Court of Versailles. The question of the Portuguese alliance appears to have been openly discussed in French circles ; it was even mentioned by Madame de Sévigné in one of her letters of daily gossip to her daughter, Madame de Grignan, to whom she wrote :—

“ You know that Madame the Duchess of Savoy has only one desire, and that is, the marriage of her son with the Infanta of Portugal. Our Ambassador at Turin, the Cardinal d'Estrées has given Madame Royale a screen in the shape of a ‘ sapata,’<sup>2</sup> on which

<sup>1</sup> C. de Beauregard, Appendix, p. 399.

<sup>2</sup> From “zapada,” the Spanish for shoe. A “sapata” alludes to the old custom in France and Spain of offering Christmas presents in a shoe placed near the chimney-piece.

is painted a very good likeness of herself. She forms the centre figure of numerous allegorical subjects representing all the virtues. Facing her is the attractive young Prince, fair as an angel, surrounded with cupids and loves. His mother is pointing with her right hand to the sea and a view of Lisbon beyond, whilst in the background fame and glory are holding crowns round which are written the following words from Virgil : *Matre dea monstrante viam :* the screen is encircled with a profusion of diamonds.”<sup>1</sup>

Prior to these negotiations of marriage, Soame, the British envoy, had already notified to his Court news of importance to England as well as to Savoy. According to his opinion, France contemplated facilitating her entrance into Italy, and in September, 1680, he thought it right to acquaint the Government “the last ordinary brought none from France, this is caused by a change in the road, for Monsieur de Louvoy will have the post road lie through Pigaroll (Pinerolo), and the great expense that is making to render that passage convenient makes it believed that in time the passage of the Mount Cenis and the Morien will be deserted and the French King have an open passage into Italy.” Soame proceeds to refer to the “perpetual health of the Duke, which I rather take notice of because the French newse letters say he is dying.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> C. de Beauregard, vol. iii. p. 400.

<sup>2</sup> Record Office. Folio 25.

These suspicious movements of France could not fail to be very disturbing to the Court of Savoy. Pinerolo was only forty kilometres from Turin, and was rightly considered the key to Piedmont. This stronghold had never been recovered from France since the day that Richelieu begged Victor Amadeus I. to lend him the fortress for use as a garrison to enable his brother-in-law, Louis XIII., to carry on hostilities with the Duke of Mantua, with whom he was fighting. On the expiration of the contract between France and Savoy, the Duke requested the withdrawal of the French troops. His demand was entirely unheeded on the part of France. Though his protestations were energetic they were useless, and at the time of which we are writing Louis XIV. was still in possession of this important place, which gave him easy access to the frontier by the Vaudoise Valley close to Fénestrelle, where he had installed a governor and a considerable number of troops. Not content with this important position he had also contracted an agreement with the Duke of Mantua, who had put in the French King's hands the fortress of Casal, where he had likewise established a garrison. In this way Turin was shut in on both sides by a foe who, though passive at the present moment, watched every move of Savoy with jealousy and distrust.<sup>1</sup>

To most people the prolonged negotiations regarding the Portuguese marriage, entailing not only an immense amount of correspondence but expenditure

<sup>1</sup> *Anne d'Orléans, Première Reine de Sardaigne, de Faverges, p. 18.*

of mental energy, would have been sufficient pre-occupation without undertaking any further business of importance ; but the restless, nervous impulse by which Madame Royale was governed enabled her to be the principal factor in all the contemporaneous schemes that gave her an opportunity for asserting her power, and she had simultaneously entered into a correspondence with the Court of St. James regarding a question of the precedence accorded to her Ambassador in London.

As a result of this correspondence, in May, 1681, Charles II. participated his good pleasure in an official letter to the Duke's ministers, that the envoys of the Court of Savoy to London should receive the same treatment as that accorded to crowned heads. This satisfactory reply was acknowledged by Madame Royale in a personally addressed letter to the King to thank him for his "generosity" in thus complying with her request.

Though Charles II. had not hesitated to show the House of Savoy an act of courtesy, this concession nevertheless gave occasion to a certain amount of friction between the two courts. No doubt there was a lurking fear at Turin that France would view with suspicion any favour shown to the Duke of Savoy by the Court of England, and as the Duke's marriage was still in negotiation, Madame Royale was still more anxious not to take any step that might be displeasing to France. The following letters from the English envoy show some of the difficulties with which she

had to contend. As is well known, the Kings of England bore the title of King of England, France, and Ireland. This was, naturally, very displeasing to the French Court, therefore in France he was simply addressed as "Roi de la Grande Bretagne." By this title France evidently wished to efface any trace of the ancient pretension of English kings to call themselves "Roi de France." This same reason urged the King of England not to recognise the restriction that France was anxious to impose; but he accepted a compromise and contented himself with the title of "Roi," and requested that all his correspondence should be addressed "Au Roi." Madame Royale was thus somewhat perplexed owing to her wish to remain on good terms with Charles II., a wish counterbalanced by the fear of offending France.

The first letter from Soame which makes us acquainted with the divergence of opinion between himself and Madame Royale on this question, was written from Turin, July 2/12, 1681, to his colleagues in London, as follows :—

"At my arrival at Turin I finde myself honoured with yours of the 6th of June from Windsor with a copie of the King's letter to M.R. (Madame Royale) being as I perceive an answer of one of hers to the King. You are pleased to take notice that His Majesty explains himself by the words 'traittements royaux,' which they here construe much to their advantage and say, that 'traittements royaux' comprehends whatever they can desire, and indeed I think

the distinction so nice that I cannot say where the difference lies, nor doe pretende to decide it, but intende in my publick audience (which they mightly press me to take) to use the words of 'traitements royaux' and 'Ambassadeurs de testes courones' without mentioning the example of France which you think may be prejudicial to His Majesty, tho that also be positive in my instructions. For that which the Count de Castelmellor calls a 'beveue' (blunder) I feare it will not prove so, for I doe not think that any letter came from this Court to England dyrected *Au Roy*, nor that it was insisted upon as a motive to incline the King to this concession, but I confesse that I think the thing so equitable and decent that I have already insisted upon it. I must confess that it puts me to some streights, for should they refuse it, I could not (nevertheless) refuse following my instructions which are positive, however I will drive the thing as far as I can and if they delay promising this I will delay my audience for some time."

Here Soame interrupts his rather complicated statement in order to give some general news on the Duke's health, and he also refers to the recent tumults in the province of Mondovi owing to the levying of a tax on salt.

" This Duke is now perfectly recovered of a feaver that began to give the Court some apprehensions for him. Dom Gabriell de Savoy and the Marq. di Pianesse are returned with these troops from the country of Mont de Vis, having absolutely reduced

those mutineers and ordered a citadell in so convenient a place that it will in probability prevent a second revolt. Tho I have not yet had my audience, my business is no seacret here, having been largely writt by the Count de Perlenque and Count de Castelmellor; and the Duke and M.R. (Madame Royale) are so fully satisfied with the King's favour, that they have already resolved to express their gratitude by giving the Count de Perlenque the character of Ambassador Extra, and sending him forthwith into England upon no other business than to thank His Majesty for this honour. Great equipage is preparing for Portugall, which voyage is said is not intended untill next autumn come twelve month.”<sup>1</sup>

Though the wording of Soame's memorandum is somewhat obtuse and illiterate, we are enabled to gather that apprehensions in regard to France were weighing heavily over the Court of Savoy, and obstructed her freedom of action. During the recent tumults at Mondovi, France had politely offered to assist Savoy by sending troops to quell the disturbances. This was the time that the young Duke was expected to sail for Portugal, and France calculated that all obstacles would be removed against her occupation of Savoy. Madame Royale, however, was equal to the occasion, and while “gratefully thanking Louis XIV. for so generous and unselfish an offer, she declined to trouble him, as the riots at Mondovi had

<sup>1</sup> Record Office, Savoy and Sardinia, folio 25.

been already repressed, and any recourse to force was therefore rendered unnecessary.”<sup>1</sup>

This incident is only related in order to show that Savoy was still in the painful position of subserviency to France ; the time had not yet come when she could defy the arrogant pretensions of her powerful neighbour, and this was doubtless the principal cause of Madame Royale’s delay in complying with the English envoy’s request.

During the same month Soame wrote another long letter on the subject, 9th–19th July, in which he states :—

“ I have had dayly conferences with the Secretary of State who extreamely pressed my audience showing me the copies of those letters that had been formerly writt to the King by which I find there hath been no inovation in the dyrection, they being all dyrected *Au roy de la Grand Bretagne* and indeed I was well informed of that matter before, and being satisfied that there was no inovation would not insist upon that point but upon the reasonablenes of the thing viz. that since His Majesty did accord them the same honours with France, they should on their sides make no difference in their treatment in anything whatever ; to which they answered that the King’s letter to M.R. (Madame Royale) was free without any condition, that his grant to the Comte de Perlenque was the same, that they were informed my instructions were so also ;

<sup>1</sup> *Storia del Regno di Vittorio Amédéo*, p. 39, Carutti. Torino, 1856.

that since this busines had made a noise all over Europe, they hoaped I would not give M.R. the mortification to have it again doubted by putting off my audience any longer. These were the seeming reasons and arguments they used, but the true ones as I imagine is, they durst not doe it for fear of displeasing France, which is so invincible an argument here that I thought fit to press no farther in a matter that could not go. So upon Wednesday last I had a publick audience both of Madame Royale and the Duke in which I used only the words of *traittements royaux*. Both Madame and the Duke received my compliments with great satisfaction and assured me of their great acknowledgment and gratitude for the King's favour which they would ever endeavour to cultivate and deserve by devoting themselves to his Majesty's interests. I also showed them my additional instructions given me for that purpose which I the more willingly did because I found they were afraid of the words 'after the manner of France,' by which I perceive they hope to gain something more in England than they have there, and this I mention more particularly becaus the Count de Perlenque is declared ambass<sup>or</sup> Ex: to go for England on purpose to thank his Majesty for this favour and take possession of it (as they terme it) in which he can claime no more than they have in France, as may be seen by my instruction."<sup>1</sup>

The rumours in reference to the Duke's bad health, to which previous allusions have been made,

<sup>1</sup> Record Office, folio 25.

were chiefly spread by his mother and her favourites, who thereby had the greater excuse for managing the direction of affairs and keeping the Duke ignorant of the trend of events.

Meanwhile the negotiations for the Duke's marriage were not progressing as Madame Royale would have wished, and Soame, in a letter dated September 4th, 1681, gives his opinion on the Duke's proposed marriage with the Infanta. He again refers to the watchful attitude of France in regard of the concerns of Savoy :—

“ I suppose it is not unknown to you that some time since the Marquis de Dronero, who is nephew to the Marq. de Burgamenero, was sent from this Court to Portugall as Ambassador Extra: to conclude the mariage betweene this Duke and that Infanta. He was chosen as a fit person both for his parts and quality to performe that splendid embassie and certainly he did it with great magnificency and integrity, he being a very just and worthy gentleman. However at his return the relation which he gave of his Embassie was not approved of by M.R. it being (as she supposed) what might rather diswade than incline the Duke to persevere in his resolution of going for Portugall. However the Marq. de Dronero justifies the relation to be literally true and sais that he thinks himself obliged both in honour and conscience to give it such that the Duke his master should not after reproach him to have told an untruth. Upon Sunday last the French Ambassador had a letter from the King his Master

in which letter he was forbid to have any more commerce or familiarity with the Marq. de Dronero, as a person disaffected to the French interests aledging that he underhand had endeavoured to breake off the mariage with Portugall and he had reported that the Portuguese had a greater aversion for the French than for the Spaniard. The Marquess avowes that for having had any private conferences with the Spanish Ambassador or endeavoured to hinder the mariage with Portugall they are things absolutely false. Most people suppose the foundation for this letter was laid at Turin, it being here a mortall sin to appeare against the French interest."<sup>1</sup>

This letter confirms the opinion that Madame Royale, in spite of her antipathy to France, had appealed to that country to support her in the accomplishment of her wish. The marriage in question was not displeasing to Louis XIV.; on the contrary, the King, in encouraging the proposal, was actuated by the same motives that appealed so strongly to Jeanne Baptiste, and he foresaw how greatly it would assist his hopes of eventual appropriation of Savoy were she to remain Regent of the Duchy for an indefinite period of time. The most important article in the marriage contract demanded that Victor Amadeus should reside in Portugal from the day he signed the contract till the birth of an heir to the throne. The King felt that Madame Royale would be a most pliable and convenient tool in the hands

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

of France, and the Duchess being occupied with her own interests and ambitions, did not pause to consider by what motives France was guided in complying so readily with her requests. Taking into consideration the further agreement that the marriage should not be consummated till the young Prince had attained his sixteenth year, Madame Royale looked to at least three years of absolute freedom of government, with the further hope that her son might during that time forget the land of his birth, and would prefer to make his permanent home in the country to which he had been transplanted at the early age of thirteen.<sup>1</sup>

Soame did not admit that the old question on which he had set his heart should be forgotten in the midst of other affairs, and anxious though he was to leave, he said he was "most unwilling to part before he had Madam's and the Duke's assurance that the letters should be addressed *Au roy*, but he really believed the delay did not proceed from want of respect to the King's person, or zeale to his interests, but from reaysons which Madam was almost ashamed to produce, viz. the management she is obliged to observe with France, which is grown a terror to this part of the world."<sup>2</sup> He began to be very impatient at the duration of an affair that he considered sufficiently important to keep him in Turin during the great heat, and prevented him taking his holiday; but he finally gained his point,

<sup>1</sup> *Storia del Regno di Vittorio Amédéo*, Carutti.

<sup>2</sup> Record Office.

and on the 1st November Madame Royale took the decision to address a letter to Charles II. *Au roy*, to be handed to the King by her Ambassador Extraordinary the Count of Perlenque.

The letter, written in a large, bold hand, indicative of Jeanne de Savoie's tenacity and will, runs as follows :—

“ **MONSEIGNEUR**,—I will do all in my power to show Yr. M. my profound respect and gratitude for the honour by which this House has been favoured, but neither the Ambass<sup>or</sup> Ex: the Duke of Perlenque, nor what he has orders to convey to you, any more than what I personally write to you, is sufficient to express otherwise but feebly all that I feel on that point. I therefore humbly beg Y.M. to grant another proof of his goodness by according me his royal protection, a favour that he alone can bestow on me.

“ With profound veneration, **Monseigneur**,

“ Your very humble and affectionate cousin and servant,

“ **J. B. SAVOIE.**”<sup>1</sup>

Victor Amadeus also wrote a letter addressed *Au roy*, expressing in similar terms as his mother his sentiments of gratitude to the King on the solution of a question that apparently was satisfactory to both courts.

Madame Royale had controlled her impatience to acquaint the Duke of the contemplated alliance between his cousin and himself till the preparations

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, folio 25.

and agreements relating to it had assumed such a definite shape as would make it a matter of extreme delicacy to draw back ; but now the moment had come, and not without a certain anxiety and some misgivings Madame Royale communicated to him her schemes for his future, in which he had not even been consulted.

Victor Amadeus was fully aware of the rumours of a proposed engagement between his cousin and himself, but he followed his mother in the art of deception, and as he had not been consulted in the matter, he did not trouble himself about it, and continued absorbed in his military interests. Most boys of thirteen with the impetuosity of inexperience would have been unable to conceal their feelings and opinions on such a momentous step in their lives, and might inadvertently have shown that they were well aware of the intrigues personal to themselves ; but Victor Amadeus was not thus ; he, like his mother, could bide his time, and repressed the strong temptation that pushed him to rebellion till the psychological moment.

Though Madame Royale had expected that some persuasion would be necessary in order to obtain the Duke's consent to the proposed marriage, she was totally unprepared for the violent outburst of indignation with which he heard his mother's decision for his future. He positively declared that the twelve vessels waiting him at Nice might as well raise their anchors, as never would he put his foot on board, and

that as to the exile she proposed to him under the alluring name of a throne, under no consideration would he contemplate a project so repulsive to his tastes.

Madame Royale was incapable of judging her son as he was, and while smarting under his harsh words and at the mortification of failure, she could not calmly accept defeat, and openly expressed the opinion that before long the Duke would certainly see the wisdom of her negotiations and would unhesitatingly conform to the proposal for an alliance that could not be considered otherwise than most advantageous to his country.

This forlorn hope indulged in by Madame Royale was finally extinguished by the Duke's determined attitude. His blood boiled at the thought that his mother's self-interest had been the leading motive power in her scheme; he fathomed her design by which she would remain sole sovereign of his states, and having taken the first step towards making a stand, he doggedly resolved to maintain the position he had taken up against his mother.<sup>1</sup>

Madame Royale having equally exhausted plausible arguments and harsh sentiments, turned from her son in dismay on being forced to admit that neither her own supplications nor those of the friends she employed to speak in her cause should have availed, and with very bad grace she had to resign herself to the unpleasant necessity that devolved on her of announcing

<sup>1</sup> *La Maison de Savoie*, p. 252, Belgiojoso.

the rupture of the matrimonial negotiations between Savoy and Portugal. Madame Royale was some time thinking out how this could best be accomplished with the least possible loss of personal dignity, and in the following diplomatic letter to the Queen of Portugal she tried adroitly to throw all the blame on Portugal, and by assuming the tone of a victim she evaded her share of responsibility in the transaction. The letter runs as follows :—

“I read to my son your last letter, in which you gave reasons why a marriage between our children was impossible, and according to your wishes I begged his consent to break off the negotiations. He gave it most unwillingly, and was surprised at the irregular proceeding so widely opposed to the sincerity of his intentions and to what he has a right to expect from others. The Duc de Cadaval, in his quality of Ambassador Extraordinary, assured us that no decision would be taken till the spring and that the fleet would infallibly return if H.R.H. was well, after having remitted to us the letters of the Prince Regent, who confirmed this assurance. The Ambassador ought to have kept to his word and to that given by his master, whereas he formed the project to precipitate affairs and publicly to decry in a most insulting manner a young Prince from whom he had received the greatest kindness and whom the Ambassador himself had recognised as his Sovereign. Time will disprove false suppositions and will show the real reasons that agitated those who may have private interests apart from those of the State.

Count Gubernatis is charged to answer the Memorandum that Docteur Barreiro handed to H.R.H. and myself, after which the Count is to take his leave and to return to us as soon as H.R.H.'s horses are put on board and everything else belonging to him, as is the custom when betrothals such as these are broken off. It would not have arisen if those whose duty should urge them to cover H.R.H.'s subjects from the insults with which they appear to be menaced, had taken the trouble to do so ; it is a position which cannot be tolerated. This, my dear sister, is my opinion on the cruel disgrace which will prevent our future intimacy, and causes me the greatest pain. I feel for the sorrow which affects us mutually, and I sympathise with the Prince Regent. You, my niece, and your country are all equally to be pitied ; you, on the loss of a son capable of being of consolation to those who have none, she on losing a husband worthy of her, whilst Portugal has missed having a Prince whose ancestors have given birth to many monarchs ; a Prince who for his personal qualities as well as his rank would have greatly furthered the glory of Portugal," etc.<sup>1</sup>

It is hard to say whether Victor Amadeus was as ill as reported, though, owing to the repeated scenes that took place between his mother and himself, his illness needed no explanation ; but whether he took advantage or not of his natural delicacy, and represented himself as being worse than was the case, it is certain that the deputation from Portugal found

<sup>1</sup> Record Office, folio 25.

him constantly in bed, totally unfit to embark for so long a voyage. And with accommodating regularity, each time the subject was renewed the Prince had another access of fever, and took to bed. The deputation were perplexed, and considered it their duty to consult the Duke's physicians on a question of such importance. On receiving confirmation of his unsatisfactory state of health, couriers were at once despatched to Portugal to report on the unfavourable aspect of affairs, not only as regarded the Duke's health, but also with reference to the unpopularity of the marriage—an unpopularity difficult to combat, as it was initiated by the Duke himself.<sup>1</sup>

When, after all this agitation, it was known that the fleet from Portugal that had lain so long at anchor in the harbour of Villefranche had finally sailed for the Tagus, a general feeling of joy spread all through the Duchy of Savoy. From the commencement of the negotiations the marriage had never been approved of by the people. They had deeply resented that their young Duke, to whom they were deeply attached, should be taken from them. As the news passed from one to another that all fears of his banishment were at an end, the whole population of Turin proceeded to the palace and gathered under the Duke's windows, and acclaimed him over and over again with demonstrations of joy. The young Prince, deeply moved at this first spontaneous outburst from his subjects, felt encouraged in his secret

<sup>1</sup> Carutti, p. 54.

determination to serve his country and his people to the best of his ability, and in that moment of union of hearts he resolved to persevere in the assertion of his own will and to override all further opposition from his mother.<sup>1</sup>

Victor Amadeus had reached the age when, according to the laws of Piedmont, he had legally attained his majority, and Madame Royale's tactless endeavours to hinder him from asserting his rights proved all the more fatal to her own ends. The party in opposition to the Regency had little by little entirely got the upper hand, and the unsuccessful termination of Madame Royale's intrigues with Portugal and France combined closed with an unpleasant episode in which three councillors of the Regency were found to be implicated.

The Marchese di Pianezza, the Marchese di Parella, and the Conte di Druent represented the highest nobility in Turin. These three conspirators had agreed to organise a political demonstration in which the crowd was to be allowed to take part and told to proceed to the reggia or palace. On reaching the courtyard they would be instructed to demand imperiously that the Regency should close and the Duke be permitted to govern according to his rights. In the midst of the general confusion and disturbance it was confidently hoped that Madame Royale would then and there resign her office, after which for greater security it had been decided to confine her in

<sup>1</sup> *Anne d'Orléans*, p. 21, Faverges.

a convent until the agitation consequent on this step should have subsided.

Victor Amadeus had not been kept in ignorance of this cabal, but though he fretted under the burden of his mother's régime, he could not yet bring on himself to take any step that might indirectly compromise him in an act of open hostility against her. This plot failed through the indiscretions of Parella, who had propagated in Milan and Venice his intentions of freeing Piedmont from a Princess who was in secret communication with France and was doing great harm to her country through her injudicious administration.

The Regent having been informed of the conspiracy did not hesitate to issue an order for Parella's arrest, but before the execution of the mandate he had time to fly from Turin into the Canevese hill country. Pianezza was imprisoned in the fort of Montmélian, whilst Druent was consigned to that of Nice.

Victor Amadeus himself signed these orders for arrest ; it is the best proof that the young Prince was still biassed by his mother's dictates, and had not yet divested himself of the bondage of maternal authority. Madame Royale proceeded to address a document to Louis XIV. in the name of Victor Amadeus, who is made to state that "malignant means had been resorted to in order to separate him from his mother, he had punished the criminals in the way they deserved, and requested the King not to interfere in

favour of those who had been guilty of such base actions."<sup>1</sup>

These three gentlemen were Victor Amadeus' best friends, and this disloyalty towards them was but the result of the daily deceits practised by Madame Royale on her son. Victor Amadeus involuntarily drifted into faults that the complete servitude to his mother had imposed on him. Especially was this the case in acts of dissimulation, a failing of his that unfortunately increased with years.

The negotiations relative to the marriage had occupied the best part of four years. All those who had contributed their share, either in favour of or against the scheme, remained discontented and annoyed at the ill-feeling which appeared to be the only result of these protracted negotiations. The Duke alone was supremely pleased that he had been given this early opportunity of showing that his will was not a negative attribute: it stimulated him to future opposition, and the consequence of his first important assertion, contrary to his mother's decision, was but the preliminary hard step that made all those to follow comparatively easy.

Madame Royale had been so entirely absorbed during this long time in her endeavours to bring her intrigues to a satisfactory conclusion, that she had neglected to notice many traits in her son's actions which were daily more indicative, to those who studied him attentively, of a character that would

<sup>1</sup> Carutti, p. 57.

turn to good or ill, according to the surrounding influence.

Even when he was barely eleven years of age he decided to wear the Order of the Annunziata, and nothing would deter him from gratifying his boyish will. He himself put the collar round his neck, which was fastened for him by the Principe di Carignano. This action on the Duke's part excited surprise and comment amongst his ministers. It was against the ancient usage for the Order to be worn before the wearer of it had attained his majority, and the fact that Victor Amadeus took on himself to discard old traditions, foreshadowed his determination to be paramount in any decisions to be taken.<sup>1</sup>

Ever since the rupture of negotiations with Portugal, the advisability of finding a suitable bride for the Duke was strongly insisted on by the Regent's councillors.

Since the agitation consequent on the proposed marriage with the Infanta, the Court at Turin had enjoyed comparative calm; but no reliance could be placed on Madame Royale's actions, and the ministers lived in constant dread of being placed by her in fresh difficulties.

President Truchi, who in a previously quoted letter is described as being "incomparably the greatest in office,"<sup>2</sup> hesitated no longer to bring to the Duke's notice the daughter of Cosmo III., Duke

<sup>1</sup> *La Maison de Savoie*, vol. iii. p. 3, C. de Beauregard.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. iii. p. 74.

of Tuscany. It was represented to Victor Amadeus that should this alliance be agreeable to him, the advantages would be manifold. The two courts were on friendly terms, and the support of an ally in the centre of Italy might often prove of utility to Piedmont against foreign adversaries.

This proposal was not displeasing to Victor Amadeus, and he entered into a correspondence on the subject with the Grand Duke, who was most amicably disposed at the prospect of the alliance. Some fear was felt that France should get wind of these negotiations, and so great was the secrecy observed relating to this matrimonial project that no trace of letters on the subject are to be found in the archives at Turin.<sup>1</sup>

Instead of favouring it as on the preceding occasion, this time it suited Madame Royale to oppose her son's marriage. She calculated that an alliance by which he would reside in his own country would entail his immediate emancipation from her authority, and would hasten her obligatory retirement from affairs. In her anxiety to hinder the necessary arrangements for the marriage, and in order to gain time, she drew up memoranda suggesting other alliances ; so systematically did she harass the ministers and prevent the advancement of negotiations that she attained her wish, and managed so well, that not only did the Court of Versailles put a veto on the marriage, but seizing the excuse of the constant frictions between mother and son, and under the pretext of strengthen-

<sup>1</sup> *Anne d'Orléans*, p. 21, Faverges.

ing the power of the Regent, Louvois informed her "he had given instructions for three thousand troops to cross the frontier and enter Piedmont."<sup>1</sup>

For the first time Madame Royale was seriously alarmed at the grave consequences entailed by her interference, and expostulated, but in vain, against the decision of Louis XIV. She was well aware of the significance of the offer and tried to decline such formidable assistance ; but the three thousand troops were already in Piedmont, they had to be provided with quarters, and were a living protest against Savoy's freedom of action in any concerns of her own.

Needless to say, there was no question of any further confidence between Victor Amadeus and his mother. Madame Royale herself became somewhat anxious at the change that had come over the Duke. It was impossible to discover what was passing through his mind or what intentions he was maturing. His moods were most unaccountable ; at one time he would appear satisfied that she should remain in the position she occupied, at another he would openly blame her for her bad administration.

Her inability to fathom the plans on which he evidently was ruminating was a great annoyance to his mother. It was known that he had made alterations in the palace by which all communication with Madame Royale's quarters was closed ; he spoke but little, and shut himself up for many hours together in his study, from which he had access to the kitchen

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

and the servants' offices by secret stairs ; through the lacqueys and valets he endeavoured to learn what was being said in Turin with regard to himself and his country. All these details concerning the Duke were soon generally known in the town and were communicated to Louvois by the Marquis de la Trouse, who had been appointed French Ambassador at Turin, with peremptory orders to keep the Court of Versailles informed of everything that occurred in the Duke's daily life.<sup>1</sup>

Madame Royale, who felt the necessity of imparting to someone her anxieties as to what baneful influences might be at work, also wrote to Louvois in March, 1683, to acquaint him that since her return from Moncalieri, she had noticed in H.R.H. a deep melancholy, a great tendency to dissimulation, and a profound anxiety of mind. Madame Royale proceeds to state :—

“ H.R.H. shows an inclination to pass much of his time with his servants, and through them manifests a wish to be kept well informed on all matters that take place in town. A great part of his day is spent either in a grotto or on his bed. Nothing contents or pleases him. He has almost entirely given up hunting, for which he used to have a real passion. Though still such a youth, he affects to be above all frivolities and shows great ostentation in all he does and says. I also regret to notice a tendency to temper and violence

<sup>1</sup> *La Regina Anna di Savoia*, chap. ii. p. 19, L. Saredo. Torino, 1887.

and but little tenderness or dependability in his conduct."<sup>1</sup>

As might be expected, Victor Amadeus soon attracted the serious attention of those who, from experience and ability, recognised in the young Prince a born diplomatist. It was remarked that it was almost impossible to know his real sentiments on any question of importance, and so great were his powers of self-control that he was known to form friendships with those who were his special aversion, if it were of advantage to do so. Very rarely did he inadvertently let slip his undisguised opinions or intuitions on a case in point, and as everything was reported to his mother, who employed her suite to keep her informed of all he did and said, these few occasions when he was off his guard were followed by long periods of still greater reserve.

The Duke was well aware of his mother's curiosity, and had gradually formed round him a party whom he could trust to second the resistance he contemplated. But the Duke's antipathy towards his mother was not based solely on resentment at her personal interference, there was another reason that hurt his pride, and caused him far greater pain ; this further source of vexation that ate into his soul concerned the reports that reached him criticising his mother's reputation.

<sup>1</sup> *Histoire de Louvois*, vol. iii. p. 182, Camille Rousset. Perrin, Paris, 1891.

In order to make this long study of Madame Royale complete, and to bring out with greater clearness her disastrous influence over the Prince, by which a fine character was seriously prejudiced, it will be necessary to dwell briefly on the subject of Madame Royale's habits of life and her intimate relations with the Marquis de St. Maurice and the Comte de Masin.

In the preceding chapter reference has already been made to the surprise and annoyance felt by the late Duke's appointment of the Marquis de St. Maurice in the Regent's Council of Trustees ; we have also read that he was entrusted by Madame Royale to convey her congratulations to Charles II. on his accession to the throne. The King, in his letter of acknowledgment and thanks, bid Soame, his envoy, "declare unto the Dutchesse how kindly wee take her late sending of Count St. Maurice unto our Court."<sup>1</sup>

The honour conferred on St. Maurice of personally presenting Madame Royale's homages to Charles II. already draws attention that he enjoyed her special consideration.

A few extracts from a book, unknown to most readers, by G. Claretta, throws a good deal of light on the whole position. This work of Claretta's is compiled from two small volumes of curious and circumstantial anecdotes relating to the Court of Turin under Madame Royale's reign.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See chap. iv. p. 86.

<sup>2</sup> *La Corte e la Società Torinese*, G. Claretta. Firenze, 1894

These *Mémoires* aroused great interest amongst bibliographers, and some difference of opinion arose as to the identification of the author, but they are now generally attributed to a Frenchman of good birth, De Grandchamp by name.<sup>1</sup> He was a lieutenant and cornet in the French army, but owing to the fatal results of a duel in which he killed a rival, he was forced to leave France and went to Italy. On arriving at Turin he offered his services to Victor Amadeus, who had no difficulty in accepting the request of so good a soldier. The Duke first gave him the command of a company of dragoons, and before long he received the appointment of aide-de-camp, a position which gained for him the personal notice of the Duke. Victor Amadeus formed a great friendship with De Grandchamp, and in a very short time he became the Duke's most intimate confidant, by whom he was entrusted with missions requiring the greatest tact and discretion. We are enabled to judge that he carried out these responsibilities with satisfactory ability, as amongst numerous proofs of the Duke's esteem and gratitude for the services De Grandchamp had rendered, it is mentioned that he received a beautiful portrait of his patron set in diamonds. No one, therefore, could have been more qualified to write his impressions of a Court that was

<sup>1</sup> *La guerre d'Italie, Mémoires du Comte de . . . contenant quantité de choses particulières et secrètes qui se sont passées dans les Cours d'Allemagne, de France, de Savoie et d'Italie.* In octavo. Two volumes. Cologne, 1710.

open to criticism and gossip, and was swayed by conflicting passions and emotions.

De Grandchamp, being thus behind the scenes and witnessing the comedies and dramas daily enacted at Court, quickly perceived the relations existing between Madame Royale and the Conte di Masino, who belonged to one of the highest families in Turin. He frankly relates of them "that the regard they had mutually felt for each other during the early period of acquaintanceship, had long since overstepped the limits of friendship, it was a matter freely discussed in town. The young Prince, though too young to remonstrate with his mother, repeatedly showed to the Count his disapproval of the reports that were being circulated."

The Duke's antipathy to Masino had not escaped the watchful eye of the French Ambassador, and he noted that "when the Count approached H.R.H., he changed colour and drew back." The French Ambassador also mentioned that in 1684, the year of the Duke's marriage, though his own conduct began to furnish ground for criticism, he was quite aware of the honour and respect due to his wife, and had said there were certain things of which a young wife should be kept in ignorance.<sup>1</sup>

But De Grandchamp, in his own words, tells us that if Masino had the possession of one key to Madame Royale's heart, St. Maurice could boast of holding two. He cared little for what the world

<sup>1</sup> Claretta, p. 67.

said, provided he enjoyed the advantages afforded by the Duchess's protection. Great disputes arose in consequence between the two rivals, and St. Maurice being in the Ministry, and therefore the most powerful, succeeded in obtaining Masino's banishment for some time to the confines of Nice.

Though Masino did not enjoy the same political position as St. Maurice, still he was sufficiently important to be of use to France ; this is clearly indicated by a few words written by Mademoiselle de Montpensier, who, as known of old, was in the midst of all political affairs. She said, in writing on the subject, "Everyone laughs at Madame Royale. It is well known that when anything important is required of her, it is only necessary to give money to Comte de Masino, who for a mere song (as money is scarce in that country) makes her do as he wishes."<sup>1</sup>

Further Court gossip relates that in 1679 a fire had broken out in the apartment St. Maurice occupied in the ducal palace, and evidence was found that Madame Royale distributed 1,500 francs amongst those who had assisted to extinguish it. Another household account shows that in 1680 she had given "1,000 francs to the son of the Marquis de St. Maurice for his maintenance at the College of Parma" ; but it was in 1678 that public attention had become most seriously alarmed by the following incident, which, needless to say, the Ambassador had not failed to report to his chief in Paris : "One

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69.

morning two heads in wax, one representing the Duchess, and the other the Marquis de St. Maurice, were found nailed to the door of the palace. Instead of orders being given to take them away quietly, the heads were left hanging till some mischievous person carried them away and exposed them on a scaffold, where they were smashed by a mock executioner before the gaze of the crowd." The Ambassador adds, not without some irony, "Madame Royale was ill in consequence."<sup>1</sup>

Though St. Maurice still retained his influence over Madame Royale, even after these last humiliating episodes, and probably for that very reason, he was peremptorily ordered to leave the country, under pretext of a mission to Rome and thence to Munich. He remained absent till the day he returned to Turin as a married man.

These short fragments from *De Grandchamps* reveal the difficult position of the young Prince. His home was a hot-bed of antagonistic interests. Each individual was absorbed in his individual intrigues, and the boy on whom the welfare of his country depended was sacrificed for the selfish gratifications of those who were unworthy to be connected with him either by ties of relationship or friendship. It is no matter for surprise to read that when Madame Royale, on retiring to her room at night, occasionally went up to the Duke and showed a wish to kiss him, he turned away and rubbed his

<sup>1</sup> *Claretta*, p. 68.

cheek as if he had been touched by someone afflicted with an infectious illness.<sup>1</sup>

These rare demonstrations of affection were new attempts of Madame Royale that she instinctively employed to retain the power that was waning; consequently she began to show some trepidation at constantly thwarting her son's will, as had been her habit, in hopes of putting off the evil hour when she would be compelled to resign the position, for which she was ready to sacrifice everyone and everything. She went from one extreme to another, and her exaggerated caresses and flatteries were even more repugnant to Victor Amadeus than her irritating interference.

As a last resource Madame Royale organised hunting parties and entertainments in which her maids of honour, most of them renowned for their good looks, took part, and tried to bewitch the Duke by their attractions.

This manœuvre to induce distraction met with a certain amount of success, and if Victor Amadeus was only playing a part in apparently entering heartily into all the diversions and amusements, at all events it was an epoch destined to be of importance to his future life.

Though the Duke paid court to all the fair ladies, one of the maids of honour, Mademoiselle Cumiana by name, proved of special attraction to Victor Amadeus; he singled her out from the others, and

<sup>1</sup> *Histoire de Louvois*, vol. iii. p. 203, C. Rousset.

showed her great proofs of attention. No particular notice was taken then of this passing episode, and it only came back to the minds of those who had commented on it at the time, when in after years the widowed Comtesse St. Sebastiano, *née* Cumiana, became the second wife of Victor Amadeus shortly after he was left a widower.

Whilst Madame Royale was congratulating herself on the change that had come over the Duke, and he himself seemed to have forgotten for the moment all serious considerations and only cared to enjoy himself, the fatal hour for Madame Royale was struck by the hand of France. It was communicated to the Duke that Louis XIV. desired he should enter into a marriage with a princess of the blood royal of France, and in order to ensure the ready consent of the Court of Savoy to this proposal he announced his intention of recalling the three thousand troops that had been such an oppression to the duchy, of which notice has been taken in preceding pages. Madame Royale, as usual, began showing all the difficulties she could bring to bear on the transaction ; but this time her protests fell on unheeding ears. The withdrawal of the French troops would alone have been a sufficient inducement to accept the offer made by the Court of Versailles, and might have been looked on as a great proof of friendship, had it not been known later that France was on the eve of war with Spain and was massing all her troops for her own convenience. More influenced by the

wish to put an end to the Regency than by any desire to be agreeable to France, Victor Amadeus agreed to consider the proposal, and in order to precipitate his emancipation he held counsel with his friends as to the best means of procedure.

Many versions were circulated purporting to be the true statement of facts regarding the steps taken by Victor Amadeus to secure the close of the Regency. Perhaps the most authentic is that given by the historian Denina, to whom it was related by old courtiers who had assisted at the scene.

According to Denina's account, we learn that the Duke had made a confidant of his most intimate friend the Principe della Cisterna, and under his advice he went to Rivoli, one of his country places near Turin, ostensibly for a shooting-party, but at the same time he was also accompanied by a company of soldiers and those of his suite on whom he could depend. The official letters had previously been drawn up, in which the Duke announced to the ministers and magistrates that from that day he assumed the entire direction of affairs. Denina states that it was precisely whilst the letter to Madame Royale was under dictation that she, having been informed of what was to take place, forestalled the announcement she dreaded receiving, and sent a messenger with one she had written to the Duke. In her letter she stated that as he had attained an age when he no longer required her assistance in the administration of affairs, she remitted to him her authority,

and even should he still wish to leave it in her hands her decision was inviolable.<sup>1</sup>

Evidently Madame Royale saw that all hopes of any further respite were at an end, and at the critical moment her unexpected tact and forbearance thus saved the situation, and instead of a scandal so anxiously dreaded, the documents were duly signed and settled between mother and son without any semblance of misunderstanding on one side or the other.

Opinions vary as to the subsequent terms that prevailed between the Duke and his mother. According to Carutti, the close of the Regency led to a decided breach between them, and the Duke not only treated his mother with marked coldness, but accused her of having squandered the public funds and of having been guided in her nomination of senators solely by mercenary motives.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, in the further course of this history we shall be able to observe that there was no evidence of any open rupture, and all the letters addressed by the Duke to his mother were expressed in the same respectful terms as the one written shortly after the last trying events, the reproduction of which is here given.

While condemning the low principles that had guided the Regent's actions, dictated by her love for power, many who knew her best were greatly distressed at the termination of her reign, and, strange to say,

<sup>1</sup> Carutti, p. 77.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78.

Du Camp de Pios le 17. 7. 1684

Les lettres de Y.R.H. me seront toujours très  
précieuses et je lui suis obligé de celle qu'elle  
me fait l'honneur de mecrire par le retour  
du Marquis de Bresé. Je ay une lassass  
que Y.R.H. prend au bon succès des affaires  
du Marquisat de Ceva et les bonses grâces  
me témoigne avec toute la reconnaissance  
qu'elle doit attendre d'un fils qui lui est  
entièrement dévoué.

Amé

INEDITED AUTOGRAPH LETTER OF VICTOR AMADEUS II.  
STATE ARCHIVES, TURIN

FROM THE CAMP DE PIOS,  
[Translation] 17th September, 1684.

Letters from Y.R.H. will be always of great value to me, and I am much obliged for the one Y.R.H. has done me the honour to write by means of the Marquis de Bresé. I have been informed of the interest taken by Y.R.H. in the successful issue of affairs in the Marquisate of Ceva; these tokens of goodwill are most precious to me, and the gratitude I feel is only what is due from a son who is deeply attached to Y.R.H.

V. AME.



though the Court rejoiced at it, this feeling was not shared by the people.

Amongst the numerous manifestations of sympathy aroused on her retirement from office, her eulogy was pronounced by the Abbé di St. Réal, who occupied the position of historian to the Court of Savoy, in a discourse, in which he pointed out the prosperous days of the Regency;<sup>1</sup> and Costa de Beauregard draws attention to the peace the duchy had enjoyed during Madame Royale's administration, a happy state of things which was soon to be discounted by subsequent wars.

Her personal attractions were doubtless very great. In earlier years the Marquise de Villars, wife of the French Ambassador, who was far from being amicably disposed to either the Duke or Madame Royale, wrote to M. de Pomponne, "This small and disunited Court is governed by a very beautiful and charming Sovereign"; and again on another occasion Madame de Villars said: "Madame Royale is a most attractive person both in looks and manner." Probably these flattering remarks from the Ambassadress were written previous to the dispute between the two ladies, which resulted in the Ambassador's recall to Paris. The quarrel arose from the strict injunctions issued by Louis XIV. that no royal honours should be shown to any Duchess of Savoy unless she were a Princess of France. In consequence of this order Madame de

<sup>1</sup> *Mémoires de la Maison de Savoie*, vol. iii., Appendix 6, C. de Beauregard.

Villars asserted her rights of being seated in an arm-chair in the presence of the Regent, instead of using a "tabouret." This was considered a great affront to Madame Royale. She refused to grant the Ambassador an audience under these circumstances, and offered to meet her at a public entertainment, where both ladies could converse standing. Madame de Villars, however, absolutely declined to waive her rights, and as Louis XIV. at that time required the services of Savoy, he recalled the Ambassador, and appointed a *Charge d'Affaires* to the Court of Turin in his place.<sup>1</sup>

In closing this discursive study on the Regent, her few claims to merit have been brought forward with the intention of showing that her long regency was not devoid of importance. Had her ambitions been actuated by altruistic motives, her influence would have been very considerable. Though her abilities were inferior to those of her son, she would have won his affection and commanded his respect had she shown him more moderation and consideration. He never shook off the early influences of his home life, and the recollection of his sufferings accepted in silent bitterness, clung to him like a heavy pall. Could he but have found his mother animated by the same fire of patriotism that stirred every fibre of his resolute will, he would have honoured and obeyed her, but chilled by her cold contempt for his youthful ardour, she forfeited his filial attachment and without

<sup>1</sup> *Anne d'Orléans*, p. 19, Faverges.

disguise he rejoiced at the termination of her arbitrary rule.

Sanguine in his expectations for the future, he unreservedly returned his people's confidence, and proudly accepted all the responsibility for the well-being and honour of his country.

## CHAPTER V

### ANNA MARIA OF ORLEANS

The Princess Palatine—Her kindness to Madame's children—Their home life—Marie Louise affianced to the King of Spain—Her grief on leaving Paris—The parting between the sisters—Description of Anna—Her marriage with Victor Amadeus is decided on—Interchange of letters on the subject.

IT has been previously stated that Philippe d'Orléans' second wife not only failed to meet with public favour on her arrival in France, but was also severely criticised by the late Duchess Henrietta's admirers and friends.

No greater contrast between the two Duchesses could possibly be imagined. Henrietta by her fascinating, insinuating ways had captivated all hearts, whereas, through her haughty demeanour, the Princess Palatine conveyed the impression that it had been a condescension on her part to marry into the Orleans family, and she did not trouble to ingratiate herself with those of the Court circle who were affronted at her apparent failure to be impressed with their importance. For the first few months after her presentation at Court, the Duke's plain German bride supplied the principal theme for gossip amongst

the flighty French women, who thoroughly enjoyed turning all her defects into ridicule.

Though totally lacking in those attractions that appeal to French taste, the ungainly Princess Palatine was not long in showing that she was far from being merely an inert piece of humanity content to serve as a butt for ignorant fault-finders. Her contemptuous disdain for all the foibles and petty vanities indulged in by the women who frequented the Court of Louis XIV. placed her on a higher level than those who held her up to ridicule, and soon assured for herself a marked position.

Elizabeth Charlotte Princess Palatine was endowed with such goodness of heart, combined with so frank and genuine a nature, as to redeem any faults that could be found at her want of grace or unreserved mode of expressing herself. Her sincerity, perhaps, was at times too explicit, and her observations instead of being skilfully veiled were occasionally blunt and bald, but her detestation of subterfuge and deceit were qualities that could only be despised by those who dreaded her cold, cutting sarcasms.

From the moment the Duchess saw the Princesses Marie Louise and Anna, she was drawn to the two motherless children, and resolved to bestow on them the care and affection they had lost by the death of their mother Henrietta.

Philippe d'Orléans, though fond of the children in a selfish sort of way, did not care to be troubled with their education, and gladly confided them to the

care of his wife. No arrangement could have been happier for all concerned ; the Duchess gained the confidence of the children, and they became the principal interest of her life. In writing to her sister in Germany she constantly alluded to both the Princesses, and especially to Anna, for whom she felt quite a motherly affection. Anna was eight years younger than her sister, Marie Louise, and in one of the letters the Duchess says :—

“ She was but two years old when I came to France. I can therefore say I am the only mother she has had : she loves me as such, and I look on her as my child.”<sup>1</sup>

Both the Princesses were singularly attractive, and if Marie Louise was more noted for her striking beauty, Anna had perhaps inherited to a greater degree her mother’s charming manners and sweet disposition.

Under such care and affection as was lavished on them by the Duchess, their childhood was peculiarly free from the woes inseparable to the years of training, the gravity of which assumes such huge proportions in the youthful mind. Perhaps almost the only shadow that temporarily affected the otherwise unruffled calm of their schoolroom days was caused by the Marquise de Clérambault, who superintended their studies. Their mother had shown great opposition to the appointment of this governess, which, as

<sup>1</sup> *Anne d'Orléans, Faverges*, p. 11.

may be remembered, was insisted on by her husband mainly out of jealousy caused by Madame de St. Chaumont's (the former lady-in-waiting) attachment to his wife. The Marquise de Clérambault repulsed the Princesses by her harsh and severe régime, and Anna, who was peculiarly sensitive, suffered from the incessant reprimands and total lack of sympathy shown by the lady who had authority over her.

But if the Marquise was unnecessarily austere towards the Princesses and intimidated them by her stern demeanour, it only increased their affectionate attachment for the Duchess ; she, too, was a strict disciplinarian, but she was likewise kind and just in her claims on her stepdaughters' diligence in their work.

Education in those days was a serious consideration, and had to be undertaken with method and discrimination. A high grade of learning was an indispensable necessity for a young lady whose birth granted her a presentation at Court, and consequently the entrance to the most fashionable salons. The age of presentations at Court varied from the years of twelve and fourteen ; the *débutante* was then expected to be able to take her part in discussions in science and philosophy, and to be fully conversant with the subjects of history and literature. A great deal of her time was also passed with the dancing-masters and professors of calisthenics. It was a *sine qua non* that a young lady should know how to walk and carry herself with an air of dignity combined with ease ; all

eyes were turned on her as she entered a room to see if she had learnt to comport herself with the calm indifference of one in whom had been inculcated the attribute of self-possession, and but little compassion was shown for any *gaucherie* of an intimidated *débutante*.

The Duchess had the satisfaction of receiving general approbation on the results of her care in the education of the Princesses. As the years passed, and from childhood they attained the age when girls begin to attract notice, the Princesses won the sympathy and interest of everyone both for their talents and individual charms.

Marie Louise being eight years older than her sister, was presented at Court, whilst Anna was still going through the training which was helping to make her the cultivated woman destined to occupy a distinguished position in Europe. The difference of age, however, was unperceived by the sisters ; they were passionately attached to each other, and those pleasures that Marie Louise could not share with Anna were shorn of half their delight.

The hitherto uninterrupted flow of happy home life received a sudden and unexpected check when Marie Louise approached her eighteenth year. For the first time the sisters, who had been inseparable in work and play, were to learn the bitter grief entailed by parting. So contented had they been in fulfilling their daily round of duties and pleasures that it had never crossed their minds that this blissful state of

contentment could not last indefinitely, and when they were told that Marie Louise was promised in marriage to Charles II. of Spain, both sisters were suddenly disenchanted, and shed tears as they mourned over the bright hours of lost childhood.

But Marie Louise had other reasons, besides the distress of being severed from her sister, that caused her to be inconsolable on hearing this disastrous news.

For some time rumours had gained ground that she was greatly attached to the Dauphin, and it was also stated that Louis XIV. was not by any means opposed to the prospect of his son demanding his niece in marriage. Marie Louise was afforded many facilities of meeting the Dauphin by the constant entertainments at Court, and the more she saw her cousin, the more she felt encouraged in the hopes that she might eventually marry him. Louis XIV., however, never allowed private inclinations to interfere with political interests, and any inclination he may have had towards agreeing to the wishes of the Dauphin and his niece were hastily brushed away on being informed that his brother-in-law, Charles II. of Spain, had announced his intention of marrying. Without a moment's hesitation, Louis XIV. put from his mind all further thoughts of a marriage between his son and niece, and decided that Charles II. must wed a Princess of France. The King of Spain was too weak to govern himself; it was well known he allowed each country, under pretext of serving his interests, to take advantage of his incapacity: there-

fore France considered it indispensable that such a monarch should be under her control and government.

At that moment Marie Louise was the only Princess suitable for the services of France, and no appeals against her uncle's decision were heeded by the King, whose will was inflexible. It is even related that Marie Louise, in despair at the future awaiting her, recalled many acts of kindness shown her by Louis XIV., and summed up courage for a last effort to arouse his sympathy one day as he was prepared to go to Mass. She threw herself at his feet and implored him to reconsider a decree that shattered all the hopes of her youth; but to Louis XIV. blighted affection was a paltry consideration to urge against political advantages, and in order to cut short an interview that pained, though it equally left him unmoved in his determination, he, not without a shade of annoyance at having been thus taken unawares, replied in words that excluded all further hope: "It would be strange indeed, Madame, if Her Catholic Majesty should prevent His Most Christian Majesty going to Mass."<sup>1</sup>

The intervening time that elapsed between preparations for the marriage and its celebration, was the saddest epoch in the lives of both the sisters. Though it was but the prologue to future and greater ills of fortune, especially to the wife of Charles II.,

<sup>1</sup> *The Descendants of the Stuarts*, p. 132, W. Townend. Longmans, Green, 1858.

yet the grief that had cast an unrelieved gloom over the illusive hopes of their childhood remained engraved in their minds as the saddest of all.

No change of circumstance occurred to alter the irrevocable decree, and the marriage took place at Fontainebleau, August 31st, 1679; at which ceremony the Prince de Conti acted as proxy for Charles II. Up to the moment of departure the Princess had maintained an admirable self-composure and dignity, but when the farewells had to be said, her impassive coldness gave way, and much to the annoyance of Louis XIV. and to the dismay of the proud Spaniards who had assisted at the ceremony, she broke into a paroxysm of grief, and openly expressed her distress at the sad situation that had been forced on her.

The Parisians, who were as much attached to the Princess as they had been to her mother, were highly indignant that her entreaties should be unheeded by the King, and they fully expected that even then her father would step in and prevent his daughter's sacrifice; but though Philippe d'Orléans had, as far as his selfish nature permitted him, shown interest in his two daughters, he was powerless in any matter insisted on by his brother, whose will was paramount. The only concession accorded to Marie Louise was that Princess Anna should be permitted to accompany her sister as far as Amboise. This delayed the parting but for a few hours, and the separation between the sisters was so heart-rending that it would almost seem they were moved by the presentiment,

which was unhappily realised, that she and Marie Louise would never meet again. Sad at heart Anna returned with her father and stepmother to her home, from which most of her happiness associated with it was gone, and for a long time she remained listless and indifferent to all attempts made to distract her.<sup>1</sup>

Anna now absorbed much of the Duchess's attention, who endeavoured by incessant kindness and warm affection to compensate the child, as far as she could, for the loss of her sister.

A few more years sped by and Anna, like her sister, began to play her part in society, and received the compliments and favours of the whole Court.

Anna could not compare with her sister either in beauty or in the sparkling flashes of wit that scintillated through the brilliant repartees of Marie Louise. As regards her appearance, the following is the portrait of Anna about the age of fifteen given by Madame de Faverges : "Anna of Orléans was tall and of the type of beauty to be found in the House of Bourbon. Her face was oval ; she had a high forehead, eyes well placed, aquiline nose, smiling lips, and an air of dignity tempered by an expression of great goodness."<sup>2</sup>

From all we can gather, and as we shall observe for ourselves in following the events of her life, the extreme gentleness and goodness of Princess Anna were her salient features. Her stepmother spoke of her as "one of the most amiable and virtuous of women" ; she also had a great opinion of her tact

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 133.

<sup>2</sup> *Anne d'Orléans*, p. 24, Faverges.



*From a print in*

*the King's Library, Turin*

VICTOR AMADEUS AT THE AGE OF EIGHTEEN

Facing p. 138



and judgment. In after years, when Anna had left Paris for her home in Savoy, the Duchess showed her appreciation of her capacities for solving solutions requiring discrimination by dedicating to her one day of her weekly correspondence, in which every serious question of the day was discussed. It was a compliment that could only be valued by those who knew what an important affair was the Duchesse d'Orléans' correspondence. Each day of the week was allotted to writing to one or other of her relations, and as she advanced in years it became her most serious occupation, organised on an unalterable method. Monday was the day she reserved for her stepdaughter Anna, and in referring to her correspondence with her, she used often to say to her friends, "This being Monday, I have passed my day in Savoy with the Duchess."

Such is the outline of the most prominent qualities of the Princess, who at the beginning of the year 1684 was proposed to Victor Amadeus as his bride; the modelling and filling in of the necessary lights and shades to complete the study of her character will be worked out in her subsequent history.

In the numerous letters which passed between the Courts of Versailles and Savoy relative to the marriage, there was but little disguise on the part of France, that should Victor Amadeus fail to comply with her demand, she was quite prepared to use reprisals with Savoy that might entail very disagreeable consequences.

Louis XIV. adopted the tone of one who was

conferring an immense favour on someone occupying a position very inferior to himself. This air of supercilious *hauteur* became more marked, as it was noted, not without some surprise, that the young Duke appeared unwilling to bind himself rashly to the suggestion made by France, and some irritation was felt by the French Government that “*Monsieur de Savoie*,” as they disrespectfully spoke of the Duke, should hesitate a single moment to give an affirmative reply to any order issued by “*le Grand Monarque*.”

Delay was the one danger that France had to guard against. Delay had spoilt the two previous combinations for the Duke’s marriage, and France used her utmost endeavours to hurry the young Prince into a positive consent to the alliance.

Amongst other means adopted to encourage him to give acquiescence on that which France had determined, a portrait of Princess Anna was sent to Victor Amadeus, with which it was reported he seemed pleased and remarked that “*Mademoiselle* looked very charming.” He then had the picture placed in his room so that it might be constantly before him.

There is reason to believe that Madame Royale was indirectly the cause that led to the Duke’s decision to vacillate no longer. His mother had resigned office, but it by no means implied that she had abandoned her habit of meddling in every event that occurred; and in this instance, as on former occasions, her interests ran counter to those of her son. When,

therefore, it became known to Victor Amadeus that she was employing means in order to delay his marriage, he was naturally much incensed that his mother should still attempt to control his decisions, and he impetuously wrote off the following letter to the Marchese Ferrero della Marmora, his Minister in Paris :—

“I wish to inform you that it is necessary to hurry on the conclusion of the negotiations, because it is my intention that Mademoiselle should leave Paris at the beginning of April. I tell you this in confidence so that you may take those steps you think best in this affair. You have had many proofs of my regard for yourself, and this regard is now still greater. I am quite satisfied at the way in which you are managing the formalities entailed by this marriage.”<sup>1</sup>

This letter clearly indicated the intention of Victor Amadeus to accommodate his own wishes to the desire of Louis XIV., and it was speedily followed by another in which the Duke begged Ferrero to endeavour to obtain such advantages as were in his power both regarding the stipulations of the dowry as well as other details relative to the marriage contract. The Duke pointed out the necessity of acting in a manner that would neither offend France nor give rise to indecorous remarks on the Court of Savoy; all the

<sup>1</sup> State Archives, Turin, quoted by L. Saredo, p. 48. This letter and many following are taken from the State Archives in Turin, to which the Author had access.

more must this be avoided, added the Duke, "as if France is not moved by friendly dispositions, no claims or requests would alter her decision, for I have had reason to know by experience that His Majesty and his ministers are inflexible on matters on which they are determined."<sup>1</sup>

The above lines, though but few, are very characteristic of the Duke's judgment, now rapidly maturing. Inexperienced as he was in political intrigues, he read through the motives of France, and actuated by the wonderful prudence and self-control that never deserted him, he knew that Savoy could not offer opposition to her powerful and overbearing neighbour, but must still temporise and wait.

Though secretly chafing that he should be compelled to submit to the caprices of France, this feeling of irritation did not go so far as to produce any sentiment of personal objection to the Princess herself. From all the Duke had heard of her, he considered that she would probably be the most suitable of all the Princesses hitherto proposed to him for marriage; he expressed himself in terms of great courtesy when writing of her to Ferrero, and told him "that he quite felt the great advantage it would be to him to win so worthy a Princess and one of such distinguished qualities as possessed by Mademoiselle; it was this thought alone which enabled him to put on one side any reflection which might have led him to judge the proposal made by France as detrimental to his interests.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49.

To her therefore he sacrificed the many remonstrances he might reasonably have made relating to the marriage."<sup>1</sup>

The preliminary arrangements were well advanced, and there was a mutual understanding that the King's command, couched in the form of a proposal, had been agreed to by Victor Amadeus. This news was officially notified to the public by the *Gazette de France* of January 28th, 1684, in which the following announcement was made :—

“On the 27th of this month the Marquis Ferrero, Ambassador to Savoy, requested an audience of the King, in order to ask the hand of Mademoiselle in marriage for his master the Duke of Savoy. His Majesty gave his assurance that this proposal was very agreeable to him. The Marquis Ferrero was conducted by the Sieur de Bonneuil, whose office it is to present the Ambassadors.”

This audience was carried out with all due pomp and solemnity. Louis XIV. condescended to speak “of the satisfaction he felt on the marriage, and referred to the affection and esteem he bore to the House of Savoy. The King said it was Mademoiselle's good genius as well as her education that had brought her this fortunate marriage, in which he hoped that all parties would be satisfied.” As previously mentioned, the corroboration of the King's

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 50.

promise to recall the troops was anxiously expected, and the pith of the situation was summed up in the following words of Louis XIV., who added, "that as his wish was always to oblige others when it was possible, he had given orders to his troops to cross the mountains back to France, for he knew it would please Madame Royale, who he hoped would always further the union of her country with France ; this sentiment he had no doubt was also shared by H.R.H. himself."<sup>1</sup>

No doubt the joy felt in Turin when the French troops were fairly across the frontier contributed in no small degree to the popularity of the Duke's marriage ; the urgent necessity for troops in which France found herself was not known, and great hopes were expressed that this alliance between France and Savoy would apply in more ways than one. These hopeful expectations for the future were also manifest in the public enthusiasm shown at Turin when the marriage of the Duke of Savoy was published. The *Gazette de France* of February 16th says :—

"The news was announced to the town last week by a salvo of artillery and bombs. The Princess's portrait was placed on a chair in the throne room, and all the Court claimed the honour of kissing the Duke's hand. H.R.H. has received the congratulations of the Papal Nunzio, also those of the Abbé d'Estrades the French Ambassador, and of all the Ministers of foreign Princes."

<sup>1</sup> *Anna di Savoia*, p. 52, L. Saredo.

The *Mercure Galant*, a journal founded in 1672, contains many amusing anecdotes relating to the Court of Louis XIV. In its pages are to be read piquant details of gossip and information of a more intimate nature than that supplied by the *Gazette de France*. This periodical occupied itself very much with Princess Anna's marriage, and claims the privilege of being possessed of facts not generally known to the public. Referring to Ferrero's audience with the King when the proposal of marriage was definitely agreed on, the *Mercure Galant* says :—

“Though Monsieur de Ferrero's audience with the King is well known, but few people are aware of what followed after M. de Ferrero had left His Majesty. The King remained for some time in his study with Monsieur; he then sent for Mademoiselle, and told her that the Duke of Savoy had asked her hand in marriage, but before giving a reply the King required her consent; he said that Monsieur, who was a good father, was also of the opinion that no engagement must be contracted with the Duke of Savoy till he was assured of Mademoiselle's approval. His Majesty went on to state, that though this marriage would not make her a Queen, she need not be less happy for this reason, as at the Court of Savoy nothing she required would be wanting. She would find the same habits and customs as in France, by which she would feel less regret at leaving her own country. The King added that if he himself had a daughter to marry she would have had to accept the

Duke of Savoy, who was not only a great Prince, but a gentleman as well.

“ In answer to these words from the King, Mademoiselle made a low curtsey and with tears in her eyes replied, that she had no will save that of His Majesty’s and Monsieur’s.”

Whilst these negotiations were under discussion, in which Louis XIV. showed to what an extent he had cultivated the art of finessing, Princess Anna alone remained calm and unperturbed at all the agitation of which she was surprised to find herself the cause.

Being of a less passionate nature than her sister, the prospect of marriage produced no feeling of emotion in Anna beyond the excitement natural to all girls on any event leading to a change in the routine of their lives.

Her home also had never been the same to her since the day that Marie Louise had married, so the thoughts of leaving it did not correspond to the distress felt by her sister, to whom the prospective allurements of a throne had offered no consolation.

Princess Anna never felt the smallest desire of opposing her betrothal to the Duke of Savoy ; she contented herself with thinking over the trivial interests connected with her marriage, and amongst other things she decided which of her friends she would ask to accompany her to Savoy.

The Court news from Turin, February 23rd, showed that the marriage transactions were progressing towards a termination, as in the following words it announced

that "the Comte de Mayano has been named to present to Mademoiselle the jewels offered her by the Duke of Savoy"; the paper also notified that "the apartments at Vercueil<sup>1</sup> were being put in readiness for the residence of the Court during the spring."<sup>2</sup>

The Princess showed great delight on receiving the presents, and with the impatience of a child who is given a new toy, she at once decked herself out in the jewellery, and proceeded to show it to everyone, including the King himself. Louis XIV. joined in the admiration expressed by the whole Court on the magnificence of the jewels and the good taste shown by the Duke of Savoy in the choice of the designs. We find that Dangeau in his diary of daily gossip refers to the beautiful presents sent by the Duke to his bride, and he makes special mention of a row of pearls of great value.<sup>3</sup>

Many of the wedding gifts offered to Princess Anna by her friends were accompanied with verses making allusions to her new home in Savoy. Amongst other figurative presents was a charming one representing a little chimney-sweep in wax, holding in one hand a case of beautiful jewels and in the other some lines of poetry. This graceful idea originated from two

<sup>1</sup> Vercueil (Vercelli) is a small place between Turin and Novara. It was one of the numerous country resorts of the Dukes of Savoy. For many years it was alternately in the possession of the Princes of the House of Savoy and the Dukes of Milan.

<sup>2</sup> *Gazette de France*.

<sup>3</sup> *Mémoires de Dangeau*, vol. i. p. 74.

of the Princess's young friends, who sent it her as a New Year's present or *étrennes*. As the law had not yet been passed which prohibited the cruel practice of employing the service of boys in cleaning chimneys, most of whom came from Savoy, the allusion was still applicable.

The lines supposed to be spoken by the little chimney-sweep to welcome the Princess to Savoy run as follows :—

### ÉTRENNES

ENVOYÉ PAR UN RAMONEUR À MADEMOISELLE

Connaissez-vous, jeune Princesse,  
 Quel est ce petit Ramoneur ?  
 C'est l'amour qui se fait honneur  
 De rendre hommage à votre Altesse.  
 Avec sa curiosité  
 De peur de se faire connaître,  
 Jetez les yeux sur ses bijoux.

Il vient du fond de la Savoie  
 Parmi la neige et les frimas,  
 Car l'hiver ne l'étonne pas  
 Lorsque c'est vers vous qu'on l'envoie.  
 Il vient vous présenter un cœur  
 Dont il s'est rendu le vainqueur,  
 Et tout fier de cette victoire  
 En échange, ce Dieu malin  
 Ose se promettre la gloire  
 D'emporter le vôtre à Turin.<sup>1</sup>

After the favourable impression made on the Court of France by the Duke's generous gifts to his bride,

<sup>1</sup> *Le Mercure Galant.*

the next step of importance related to the marriage contract. This time it was not so easy a matter to arrive at a conclusion that suited all parties. A great deal of correspondence took place, and several weeks were passed in wrangling and disputing before the agreement was drawn up, in which Louis XIV. settled on his niece 900,000 francs, besides 60,000 francs to be disposed of in jewellery. 240,000 francs were to be taken from the interest of the marriage dowry of Henrietta, the mother of Princess Anna. On receiving this sum of money from England, the Princess agreed to renounce all claims on her father or any other fortunes that might be left her, on condition that this sum should be her property to leave to her heirs in direct lineage.

The Duke of Savoy guaranteed 80,000 francs of jewellery, which likewise were constituted as being his wife's property, and gave her an allowance of 100,000 francs besides settling a dowry of 40,000 francs.<sup>1</sup>

All the official business connected with the marriage had, as we have seen, reached an advanced stage in the month of February, but it does not appear that Victor Amadeus up to that time had addressed any personal letter to Louis XIV. The Duke had prudently waited to see what turn affairs would take before committing himself, and during the negotiations, whilst the envoys of both Courts went to and fro between Paris and Turin, Victor Amadeus had

<sup>1</sup> *Anna di Savoia*, p. 54, L. Saredo.

contented himself with leaving the obligatory interchange of compliments and courtesies in the hands of his Ambassador. Not till the 8th March did he write the following lines to Louis XIV. on the subject of his marriage :—

“I can no longer defer, Monsieur, expressing to you personally my profound gratitude for the grace you have accorded me in the person of Mademoiselle. The gift you thus bestow on me is of such infinite price that it makes it impossible for me to convey the value I put on your generosity. I send you the Comte de Mayan to assure you still further of my sentiments, and to repeat to you that the honour of your esteem and of your good-will is what I wish for the most in the world. “(Signed) V. AME.”<sup>1</sup>

By comparing letters and dates in the Archives of London and Turin, it is curious to note that the same day that Victor Amadeus wrote this letter to Louis XIV., which was purely a matter of courtesy demanded of him by the existing circumstances, he despatched one to Charles II. The Duke had not forgotten his friend and ally in England, and had only waited to acquaint Charles II. of his marriage until he had written to Louis XIV. The fear of France was the basis of all the steps taken by Savoy on small or great occasions, and impeded any spontaneous action on her part. There has been reason to observe how insidiously France had propa-

<sup>1</sup> State Archives, Turin.

gated that sentiment of fear when difficulties were raised by the Court of Savoy on the proper mode of addressing the King of England.

The letter from Victor Amadeus to Charles II., dated the 8th March, was written in most cordial terms. Amongst other claims to his friendship, he recalled to the King's mind his near parentage with the bride, and reminding him of his former favours, he begged that the courtesy shown to him in the past might be continued in the future.

Madame Royale also thought it behoved her to write to Charles II. on her son's marriage. It was an event, she told the King, that gave her all the greater satisfaction, as by the Duke's alliance with Mademoiselle he would have the honour of being placed in still closer connection with His Majesty. This, she hoped, would result in renewed proofs of the King's protection, a favour she begged for with all "l'empressement imaginable."<sup>1</sup>

The Court of St. James entirely concurred in the sentiments expressed by the Duke and his mother on this marriage. It was an event of special interest in England, and increased the sympathy that Charles II. and his father had invariably shown towards the Dukes of Savoy, who on their side felt that they had a dependable support in the House of Stuart. All the letters from London to the Court of Turin on this occasion refer to the closer relationship by which the two Houses would be bound, and are written in

<sup>1</sup> Record Office. Savoy and Sardinia, folio 25.

the same strain as the following one from Queen Catherine, the wife of Charles II., to Victor Amadeus.

“MONSIEUR MY BROTHER,—Having always taken interest in the smallest concerns relating to you, it will be easy for you to believe how sincerely I participate in your joy at the arrangements concluded for your marriage with Mademoiselle my niece. It seems to be the height of your desires and will procure you the blessings of Heaven. This I sincerely wish you, and shall be always,

“Monsieur my brother,

“Your good sister,

“CATHERINE R.<sup>1</sup>

“LONDON, 23rd March, 168 $\frac{3}{4}$ .”

<sup>1</sup> State Archives, Turin.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE MARRIAGE OF PRINCESS ANNA

The attractions of the bride—The arrogance of Louis XIV.—Description of the ceremonies—Monsieur accompanies his daughter as far as the frontier—Victor Amadeus starts to meet his bride—Their first meeting—The arrival at Chambéry—Fatigue of the bride—Her charming disposition.

SOME time previous to this date, Victor Amadeus had written a letter to his affianced wife, and had sent it to Ferrero with orders to remit it to the Princess. But the Duke had not realised the rigorous etiquette of the French Court, and did not take into consideration that the simplest matters entailed the most tedious demands, and before the letter could be placed in Mademoiselle's hands many formalities had to be gone through. First of all Ferrero found that he was expected to acquaint her father of the letter he had in his possession, and it was Monsieur who had to tell the Princess that Ferrero held a letter for her from the Duke. The next problem discussed was as to the means by which she could receive the letter, as it was contrary to custom that any gentleman should have admittance to her apartments. On this point, however, Monsieur was inclined to be lenient, owing to the circumstances, and decided that the rule might

be waived to enable the Minister to carry out the commission entrusted to him by his Prince. It might have been supposed that the Princess would now have received the letter she was burning to read without further obstacles, instead of which the Minister was still faced by the greatest difficulty of all. Court etiquette prohibited any *fiancée* from receiving private communication from her betrothed previous to his presentation to the King. Owing to the impossibility that the Duke himself should request the honour of an interview, the duty devolved on his representative; and though Ferrero strictly conformed to the required form and claimed an audience in the name of the Duke, Louis XIV. allowed many days to pass before he complied with the Minister's demand. The letter finally was put into the hands of Mademoiselle, and on obtaining her father's consent she opened it; the contents, wrote Ferrero to his master, seemed to please her, and she blushed as she read it. After perusing it several times she carried it off, and showed it to the whole Court, and was still further pleased at the general approbation at the sentiments expressed by the Duke for his bride.

Princess Anna was granted permission to reply to Victor Amadeus. This she did in terms of touching simplicity and grace that reveal the unusual charm of her nature. She also wrote in words of affection and respect to Madame Royale. The facsimile of the letter written to her future mother-in-law is here given; it enables an idea to be formed of the

de versaille ce 10 aout

il souete si fort destre ames de moy  
madame que le me fass un plaisir  
extreme de croire se que vous  
me ditte jespere que ma conduite  
vous persuadera mieux que ma  
parole de tenue que iay de vous  
plaire et de vivre avec vous d'une  
maniere qui ne contribuera pas moy  
a mon bonheur que votre satisfaction  
il me persuade que mon obesiance et  
mon amitie et ma tendresse quand  
elle vous sra connue ne diminuera  
pas les sentiments que jespere que vous  
avez pour moy

Anne D'Orléans

INEDITED AUTOGRAPH LETTER OF ANNA MARIA OF ORLÉANS  
STATE ARCHIVES, TURIN

[Translation]

FROM VERSAILLES, April 10th.

I so earnestly wish, Madame, to gain your affection that it has given me intense pleasure to receive your kind expressions of sympathy for me. I trust that my conduct will persuade you better than my words of my desire to please you and to live with you in such a way that will contribute as much to your satisfaction as to my happiness. I sincerely hope that my obedience, attentions, and affection, when they are known to you, will not lessen the sentiments that I would wish to believe you will feel for me.

ANNE D'ORLÉANS.



singular freshness of mind and modest disposition of a Princess, who had remained unspoilt and delightfully simple in the midst of the luxury and lavish prodigality of a dissipated Court.

Ferrero the Minister had quite lost his heart to the Princess, and as he was deeply interested in all that concerned his young master, he felt he could not serve him better at the present moment than by repeating to him any incident, however trifling, that referred to her. Thus we find he wrote to the Duke that one morning he went to pay his respects to Mademoiselle and found her engaged in dancing, and, the Minister went on to say, "I can assure you, it would be impossible to meet with anyone who could dance with greater grace, decorum, and dignity pertaining to a real Princess."<sup>1</sup> In previous letters the Minister had often found occasion to report to Victor Amadeus that the Princes at Court had frequently expressed their satisfaction on the marriage, and that Monsieur had told him he hoped "his daughter would prove to be a comfort to H.R.H., as besides her sweet disposition she had the advantage of a good education." Madame, Monsieur's second wife, said Ferrero, had also shown her pleasure at her step-daughter's marriage by saying "she only hoped a similar good fortune awaited her own daughter."<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile, whilst the last preparations for the marriage should have been all but completed, the

<sup>1</sup> The Marchese Ferrero to the Duke, 3rd March, 1684. L. Saredo, p. 54.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52.

interminable disputes over petty trifles increased daily, and continually delayed the possibility of fixing a date for the ceremony.

The *Mercure Galant* often threw out hints at the differences that were agitating the two Courts, and the following article, published in the April number, was written with the evident intention of reminding the Duke that he had not shown the proper appreciation of the great alliance he was going to make. The article ran as follows :—

“ It will have been remarked that whenever Savoy has been able to ally herself with the principal Crowns of Europe, she has never neglected turning to account any advantages that such alliances procured for her ; she has always obtained great glory and satisfaction from those connected with France. Some months ago the Duke of Savoy commenced the necessary negotiations in order to inform the Court of France that he ardently desired to enter into a marriage with Mademoiselle ; and no objection was raised by France against the wish of the young Sovereign. In no other part of the world could he have better gratified his desire to make a very great alliance. This Princess is of the Houses of Bourbon, Austria, and Stuart. She is the niece of both Louis XIV. and of Charles II. King of England, sister of the Queen of Spain, and is closely related to all the great Houses of Europe. In conclusion, she is the daughter of Monsieur, a son of France and only brother of Louis le Grand. Monsieur is a Prince well known for his military successes and the many places he has taken, besides

being noted for the courage he displayed in the memorable battle of Cassel."

The Princess had felt the first faint tinge of disappointment to her castles in the air when she was told that the list she had prepared giving the names of those friends she would like to accompany her to Piedmont could not be considered for a moment. The Duke, wishing to avoid annoyances that would probably arise at Court should there be many strangers and foreigners, had decided that the Princess's suite was to be reduced to as limited a number as possible.<sup>1</sup>

The next decision that had to be taken was a more serious question, as it concerned the choice of the Duke's representative at the marriage ceremony. This question gave rise to many conflicting opinions between the two Courts. On the part of Savoy the wish was expressed that Monsieur, the bride's father, should accept this office, but the French ministers strongly opposed the Duke's desire; they said the duty ought to have devolved on the Duc de Chartres, but as he had not yet attained the legal age of fourteen, the choice fell on the Duc du Maine, a natural son of Louis XIV. and Madame de Montespan, who had attained his fourteenth year. The same discussions took place relative to the lady who should be chosen to accompany the Duchess of Savoy on her voyage. Victor Amadeus showed

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53.

his preference for his aunt, the Princess of Baden, but Louis XIV. decided that the Comtesse de Lillebonne should accompany the Duchess, and thus again Victor Amadeus was shown that his wishes were held of small account in France, who intended to conduct affairs as best suited her. On these two points the Duke felt the inutility of insisting ; nevertheless, when any opposition was made on matters that affected his own Court, the Duke then gave evidence of his firm intentions that he would allow no one to overrule him. This was the case now. When he was informed that Monsieur desired to accompany his daughter part of the journey, Victor Amadeus, in words that admitted no discussion, said he would only agree to this proposal on condition that " Mademoiselle, who would then be the Duchess of Savoy, should run no risk of having her rank prejudiced in being thus accompanied by Monsieur and Madame his wife, who were not reigning Princes, whereas Anna Maria of Orleans would be so as soon as she was married." <sup>1</sup>

Another point on which Victor Amadeus raised an objection related to the banquet that Louis XIV. had announced his intention of giving after the ceremony. The Duke had suspicions that his wife would not be assigned her proper place at table, and he wrote to Ferrero that he feared precedence might be given to Madame, who was not Mademoiselle's mother ; therefore it would be far better that Made-

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55.

moiselle should have a small repast alone, in her travelling dress. In this way all discussions as to whether concessions should be granted to Madame, or who should have precedence, would be avoided. Madame was not Mademoiselle's own mother, and could have no pretext to the same position in regard of her stepdaughter such as Monsieur could demand, who was her father.<sup>1</sup>

In spite of all these hindrances to the accomplishment of the marriage, it was now definitely established to take place the 10th April, the day after the *fiançailles*, or signing of the marriage contract.

To avoid any further excuses for delay the two Courts agreed that the ceremony should take place without any great formalities. There was all the more reason for this decision, as both the Courts of France and Savoy were in mourning for the Queen of Portugal, whose death had occurred in December, 1683.

Ferrero wrote to the Duke a long and graphic account of the *fiançailles* and evening reception on the 9th. Among other numerous details he reported that when the Duc du Maine presented himself in Mademoiselle's apartment accompanied by his suite, she at once rose from her seat and took the Duke's right arm, whilst the Envoy Extraordinary of Savoy, the Comte Magliano, offered her his left. Her train was in cloth of silver, and measured nine metres in length. It was entirely powdered with diamonds and pearls, and

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 56.

weighed so heavily that even with the support of the two gentlemen she would have been unable to move had not Mademoiselle de Chartres, her stepsister, assisted her to carry her bejewelled train. Although in mourning, the Duc du Maine's clothes were covered with precious stones. The waistcoat, shoulder-knots, and facings of his cape were powdered with diamonds and pearls. Even the trimmings of crape were relieved with strings of diamonds ; on his hat alone there were a million worth of jewels. This curious little procession proceeded to the Dauphin's apartments, where they waited whilst the King was informed of the opening of the proceedings.

Before long, word was brought to Princess Anna and the Duc du Maine that the King was ready to receive them. On entering His Majesty's apartment they found him seated, with a table in front of him, surrounded by the children and grandchildren of France, and all the Princes and Princesses of the blood. M. Colbert de Croissy read a few lines of the marriage contract, which the King said was sufficient ; he then took the pen presented to him by the Minister and signed it. His signature was followed by those of the Dauphin, Monsieur, Madame, the Duc de Chartres, and Mademoiselle, who, as she advanced towards the table, made low curtseys to the King, and to Monsieur, and Madame, as if she asked their permission before doing so. After all the Princes and Princesses had added their signatures, the ceremony of the betrothal took place

under the direction of the Cardinal de Bouillon. This being concluded, all the company moved into the long gallery and the suite of rooms generally reserved for play, and assisted at a magnificent collation.

All the Princes and Princesses were magnificently dressed, and loaded with jewels of great price. Ferrero said that everyone seemed animated and gay, and when the contract was read and signed, first by the King, and by all the Princes and Court dignitaries successively, nothing occurred to mar the brilliancy of the festive scene.<sup>1</sup>

The *Gazette de France* and the *Mercure Galant* supply the most authentic report on the proceedings of the eventful 10th April, from which source are gathered the following details :—

“On the 10th the Marquis Ferrero paid his farewell respects to the King before starting to accompany the Princess on her journey to Savoy. The Marquis also introduced Comte Mayan, Comte Osasque, the Marquis de Préla, and Baron de Roaschia, so that they likewise could take leave of His Majesty. These gentlemen were afterwards received by Monseigneur the Dauphin, by Madame, his wife, as well as by Monsieur and Madame. They were ushered into the presence of these Princes by the Sieur de Bonneuil, whose office it is to introduce the Ambassadors. The same day, about half-past eleven, the Ambassador of Savoy, always under the

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 60.

escort of the Sieur de Bonneuil, went to fetch first the Duc du Maine, and afterwards Mademoiselle, who had previously received the Communion.

“The Duc du Maine wore a black Venetian costume, the whole of which was ornamented with diamonds. The trimmings were of narrow rose-coloured ribbons, and the feathers in his hat were of the same colour, covered with diamonds.

“The Princess had changed the dress she had worn for her early morning devotions, and was now dressed in a silver brocade trimmed with lace, also of silver, and covered with jewels. All the jewellery is her own : she has enough to make several complete sets. The King, Monsieur, and Madame, and the Queen of Spain have given a large number, and the Duke of Savoy’s pearl necklace, which is valued at 30,000 pistoles,<sup>1</sup> is only one of his gifts ; he has also sent the Princess some diamond studs, a pendant, a clasp, and many other handsome presents. Mademoiselle was conducted to the apartment of Madame la Dauphine, where all the other Princesses were assembled. This august assembly followed according to their rank towards the chapel ; they joined the King in the gallery, and, passing through the large apartment, descended the grand staircase. At the foot of the stairs a hundred Swiss Guards were drawn up in line, as is the custom when the King passes to attend Mass ; the line of the Swiss Guards extended as far as the chapel door, where the Life Guards formed the guard of honour.

“Whilst the Court were taking their places in the

<sup>1</sup> Pistole, a Spanish coin, the value of about ten shillings.

chapel the Cardinal de Bouillon, who wore a mitre, and held a crosier, sat in a chair with his back to the altar. As Mademoiselle and the Duc du Maine advanced to kneel on the velvet cushions placed for them on the altar steps, all the royal family took up their position either to the left or right, in order to allow them a free passage.

“ During the marriage ceremony the King did not take his place at his *prie-dieu*, but stood with the Princes and Princesses near the bridal pair. When the Cardinal asked Mademoiselle if she accepted the Duke of Savoy for her husband, before replying she curtseyed to the King, and to Monsieur, and Madame, as she had done the preceding evening at the marriage contract. On the termination of this part of the ceremony the Princess and the Duc du Maine still remained on their knees, and the King took his place at his *prie-dieu*. Of all the august personages, the King and the Dauphin alone wore no jewels, on account of their mourning ; the rest of the company, though dressed in mourning, were covered with jewels. Nothing could be more magnificent than the dress of Madame la Dauphine. Monsieur’s waistcoat was entirely embroidered with diamonds, and the sleeves were tied by strings formed of diamonds. The Duc de Chartres had a set of emeralds, and his shoulder-knot of crape, as well as the bow in his hat, sparkled with diamonds. The Prince de Conti had diamond buttons on his waistcoat. The Comte de Toulouse, Mademoiselle de Nantes, and Mademoiselle de Blois, owing to their youth, were not required to appear in deep mourning ;

they wore black dresses with silver, and their jewels were arranged in such good taste that they excited murmurs of admiration on all sides. During Mass a *Laudate* was sung by the choir; the *Duc du Maine* and *Mademoiselle* were each presented with a wax candle to hold during the *offertory*; the *Abbés* of *St. Vallier* and *Fleury*, the King's chaplains, held the canopy over the heads of the married pair. On the conclusion of Mass, the marriage register was laid before the King on his *prie-dieu*; after he had signed, all those nearest in relationship added their signatures; the King then gave his hand to *Madame Royale* and led her to his own carriage.

“Whilst they walked straight from the *prie-dieu* to the carriage drawn up at the door facing the altar, the rest of the royal family left the chapel by the right-hand entrance in the nave by which they had entered and proceeded up the grand staircase. As the King conducted *Madame Royale* to the door he kissed her twice, and in answer to some remark made by her in so low a voice that it could not be overheard, the King seemed to reassure her with that persuasive manner which is such a charm of his. *Madame Royale* was bathed in tears, and His Majesty kissed her a third time as he put her in the carriage. Instead of entering the palace by the usual entrance, the Princess was driven to another courtyard to show that she was no longer one of the royal family of France, but a foreign Princess.

“*Madame Royale* on reaching her father's apartment was so overcome with emotion, that had not the lace of her gown been hurriedly cut she would have

fainted. She dined with Mademoiselle de Chartres, now to be called Mademoiselle in her place, and after dinner Monsieur came to fetch Madame Royale. The young Sovereign threw herself at his feet to implore his blessing, both father and daughter were in tears ; but Monsieur at last raised her from her knees, kissed her, and after a touching farewell with Madame, Monsieur started with her on the journey as far as Juvisy, where they separated. The Princesse de Lillebonne had been named by the King to accompany Madame Royale, and on the part of H.R.H. the Sieur de-Grand Maître de la Garderobe de Monsieur likewise accompanied her. She was also escorted by the Maréchale de Grancé as lady-in-waiting, and the Chevalier de Châtillon, capitaine des Gardes du corps of Monsieur, who had been appointed by H.R.H. to present his compliments to the Duke of Savoy. Madame Royale was also provided with an escort of the King's officers as far as the frontier.”<sup>1</sup>

Ferrero did not omit to inform the Duke that in accordance with his wishes the Duchess had not assisted at the marriage banquet, but had eaten privately in her own room very early in the day before she had communicated, and after the ceremony she had again returned to her apartment and had put on her travelling dress ready to start on her journey.

Ferrero likewise referred to the incident that had

<sup>1</sup> *Gazette de France ; Le Mercure Galant.*

excited general comment, and told the Duke that the King had shown extreme courtesy to his niece, as he accompanied her to her coach after the marriage; the Minister said he had reason to know that His Majesty had expressed himself strongly on the esteem he felt for the Duke of Savoy, and his contentment that his niece should be so well settled in life. Ferrero also added that "the King seemed quite overcome by emotion, which shows how much he respects and loves the Princess."<sup>1</sup>

These despatches from Ferrero afforded Victor Amadeus much satisfaction and interest, though he showed some annoyance that one point in reference to the question of precedence had been overlooked. He was informed that after the marriage, as they left the chapel, Monsieur was still accorded the place he had occupied hitherto on his daughter's right hand, and as Victor Amadeus had expressed himself very strongly on the conditions to be observed as soon as the Princess could claim the privileges of a reigning Duchess, he felt that his desires should have been respected.

The Duchess was too much agitated at all she had gone through the last twenty-four hours to attach any importance to such formalities, and as she started on her journey her mind was dwelling on the fact that each hour was increasing the distance between her and her native land. She was sad as she thought that she was leaving Paris, her home, and Madame

<sup>1</sup> *Anna di Savoia*, p. 62.

whom she dearly loved for an unknown country, new faces, and an alien sphere of interests. After the emotion of parting with her father at Juvisy, the responsibilities awaiting her at the early age of fifteen effaced for an instant the expectations for the future, and she experienced a feeling of discouragement lest she should not prove competent to satisfy the requirements of the high position she had been chosen to fill.

These clouds, however, threw but a temporary shadow over the vista in prospect, and she regained assurance as she proceeded on her way and noticed the numerous proofs of solicitude taken by Victor Amadeus to lessen the tedium and fatigue of the journey. Amongst other attentions, couriers awaited her arrival at every stopping-place, each the bearer of a kind message and compliments from the Duke. The Duchess was not unresponsive to these courtesies and gladly availed herself of these opportunities of communicating with her husband, to whom she penned numerous little missives, all of which conveyed in a few words the affection she was prepared to offer him. The following note is one of those she wrote to him on her arrival at Lyons, when within a few days of her journey's end :—

“LYONS, May 3rd.

“I am sending you Marigni, who has been one of my gentlemen-in-waiting since my birth, to thank you for the interest you have conveyed to me through Count Dronero. It is hard for me to express the

pleasure I feel, or to tell you with what impatience I wait for the moment to assure you that I wish to show you all the attachment of which I am capable."<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile the Duke had left Turin, and, accompanied by a large retinue, was travelling to meet her. The Comte di Scaravello, a gentleman-in-waiting, and one of the suite, provides an account of the last incidents relating to their first meeting. On May 1st the Duke had arrived at Chambéry in order to be in readiness to receive his bride. On entering the town the Duke first received the benedictions of the clergy in the chapel adjoining the castle, and then, with the acclamations of the populace, he entered the castle and granted audiences to all the great personages of Chambéry, who crowded into the presence chamber for the honour of paying homage and kissing the Duke's hand. The evening of his arrival Victor Amadeus supped privately with his suite, but the following nights he entertained the ladies with balls and receptions.

On the 6th May news was brought to the Duke that the Duchess was within nineteen kilomètres of Chambéry at Pont de Beauvoisin, the boundary between France and Savoy, close to the quaint little village of Les Échelles. This village derived its name from the *échelles* or ladders with which the

<sup>1</sup> State Archives, Turin. Letters from the Duchess of Savoy, Anna d'Orléans, written to her husband, Victor Amadeus, Duke of Savoy.

villagers scaled the rocks when business or pleasure called them to Chambéry. The situation of the village was such that this was the only means of communication with Chambéry until Charles Emmanuel II., in 1670, undertook to make a track known as the *Chemin de la Grotte*, through the formidable barrier of rocks, and inaugurated a less primitive way of connecting the village with the town.

Scaravello relates that the Duke marched into the village at the head of his Guards and archers in gala costume, to the sound of fifes and trumpets and beating of drums, followed by all his suite of pages and servants.

The sound of martial music and the gay display of costumes brought all the village folk to their doors wondering at the reason for this strange sight in the peaceful village of *Les Échelles*. The Duchess had arrived only a few hours previously, and was just finishing her breakfast as the Duke entered the village.

On hearing the approaching sound of fifes and timbrels, and the cacophony produced by cheers, voices, and a general hubbub of excitement, she quickly rose from the table and looked out of the window to ascertain the cause of all this stir and commotion ; when she saw the pageant, at the head of which marched a fair young man of distinguished and martial bearing, who she was told was Victor Amadeus, without a moment's hesitation, casting to the winds all the tedious instructions of etiquette

with which latterly she had been surfeited, she flew down the stairs into the street and threw herself into the Duke's arms.

Many of the suite looked with cold disapproval on this unexpected dénouement to the meeting between the bride and bridegroom, the formalities to be observed having been rehearsed to the bride over and over again, but Victor Amadeus felt all the charm of the spontaneous movement that by its touching simplicity conveyed so much, and deeply moved, he responded to the grace of her action and embraced her tenderly.

After a short rest the Duke and Duchess, attended by their united suites, started for the few hours' journey to Chambéry. The Duke assisted the Duchess into a Sedan chair, for the road was still too rough and rocky to allow a carriage to pass, and partly in her chair and partly on foot the bridal party arrived at Chambéry at dusk. When they were still some distance from the town the sky was already bright with the continuous display of rockets sent up in their honour, and as they entered the old home of the Duke's ancestors a welcome smiled on them from every window, not one of which was without illumination, whether the dwelling of the rich or the poor.

The Duke and Duchess first proceeded to the chapel and received the nuptial benediction of the Archbishop of Grenoble, after which they entered the castle on foot, the Duke holding his wife's hand, and



THE OLD CHÂTEAU AND CHAPEL OF THE DUKES OF SAVOY AT CHAMBÉRY

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stopping frequently to present her to the enthusiastic people ; they passed through the old gateway into the guard-room and thence to the hall, between the lines of troops formed by the horse guards and archers. As soon as the Duchess had recovered from the fatigue of the day Victor Amadeus presented to her the Principessa della Cisterna and the Marchesa del Maro as the ladies chosen by him to be her ladies-in-waiting.

This apparently trifling incident occasioned the Duchess a little pang of sadness in bringing to her mind all those friends she had left behind her in Paris owing to the Duke's wish.

She had not contemplated that sacrifices would be required of her in matters that concerned herself only, and when she was told that the two ladies just presented to her were to take the place of the Comtesse de Lillebonne, her two daughters, and the Maréchale de Grancéy, none of whom could accompany her any further, and must return to Paris, the young bride was unable to control her tears on parting with the Comtesse and her two daughters. They had been the companions of her girlhood, and she felt lonely and depressed at losing all those who were dear to her, within a few days. The only French people she was allowed to retain in her service were a certain Madame Dabon and her daughter, who served the Duchess in the capacity of maids, and this concession was only allowed her until her arrival in Turin.

Victor Amadeus had not yet learnt to trust his

wife ; the force of habit had made him distrustful of even those who had his interests at heart. This was the only excuse for not complying as far as he could with his wife's wish, and accounted for his ungrounded fears that should he permit in her suite any of her former friends or servants, she might through their influence be led to promote French interests.

Not till each lady of the town of Chambéry had been presented to her in turn was the Duchess able to retire to her room and take some rest. Even then the respite allowed her was but short, as the night by now was far advanced, and she had hardly composed herself to enjoy the quiet of her own apartment before she was roused to take her place at supper presided over by the Duke, and attended by all the suite.

As soon as supper was ended the Archbishop of Grenoble arrived followed by his chaplain, and was ushered into the bedroom in order to go through the recognised custom of blessing the nuptial bed. Worn out by fatigue and emotion, at the close of what appeared to the Duchess not one, but many days massed together, so numerous and various had been the episodes ever since daybreak, she had still to conform to custom, and not only was required to assist at this ceremony, but she was expected to do so on her knees by the foot of the bed.

The dawn of a new day was fast approaching before the Duchess was told that the last ceremony of the longest day of her life was concluded.

The next morning the Duke and Duchess, followed by all their suite, went to church and attended Mass, and after a few days at Chambéry, passed chiefly in public and in wearisome functions, the bride and bridegroom proceeded to Turin.

From this day all Anna's interests and ambitions were centred in Victor Amadeus. She gave him her heart with confiding trust, and laid her life at his disposal. To this heart-whole devotion her husband did not always respond with the fidelity she merited, but though Anna suffered deeply she knew how to suffer silently, and if she failed to absorb his affections she always commanded his esteem and respect.

## CHAPTER VII

### EARLY MARRIED DAYS

Arrival in Turin—The meeting between Madame Royale and her daughter-in-law—The Castello and the ducal palace—The chapel of the Holy Shroud—The ceremonies attendant on the exposition of the relic—The favourable impression made by the young Duchess—Her delight in her new home—She receives numerous deputations—Letters from the Court of St. James—The prisons round Turin—The Duke's difficult temper—His tendency to avarice—Description of his dress—His attachment to his army—He patrols the streets—His midnight walks—The Duchess is disappointed—The Duke pays court to other ladies—Louis XIV. controls the Duke's movements—He is compelled to postpone a journey to Venice—The arbitrary interference of the King in the marriage of the Principe di Carignano—Victor Amadeus rebels against the officiousness of France—The birth of a Princess.

**V**ICTOR AMADEUS and his bride were given a most cordial welcome on their entry into Turin, and the Court news stated that “on the 10th May the Duke and Duchess of Savoy arrived there from Rivoli, where they had found Madame Royale and Princess Louise of Savoy, accompanied by the whole Court, waiting to receive them. Their Royal Highnesses entered Turin towards evening, the town was a blaze of light with illuminations and fireworks. The cannons were fired three hundred times as a salute, and the same number of rockets were discharged.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Gazette de France*, 24 Mai, 1684

Scaravello in his description of Court ceremonies further relates that the meeting between Madame Royale and her daughter-in-law was very hearty. She had met the young couple at the entrance door to the Palace of Rivoli, and after greeting the Duchess with great affection, she accompanied her upstairs and wished her to take the right hand, being the place of honour ; this act of courtesy, however, on the part of Madame Royale the bride refused to accept.<sup>1</sup>

The palace to which Victor Amadeus conducted his young bride is situated in the Piazza Castello, by far the most interesting part of the town of Turin.

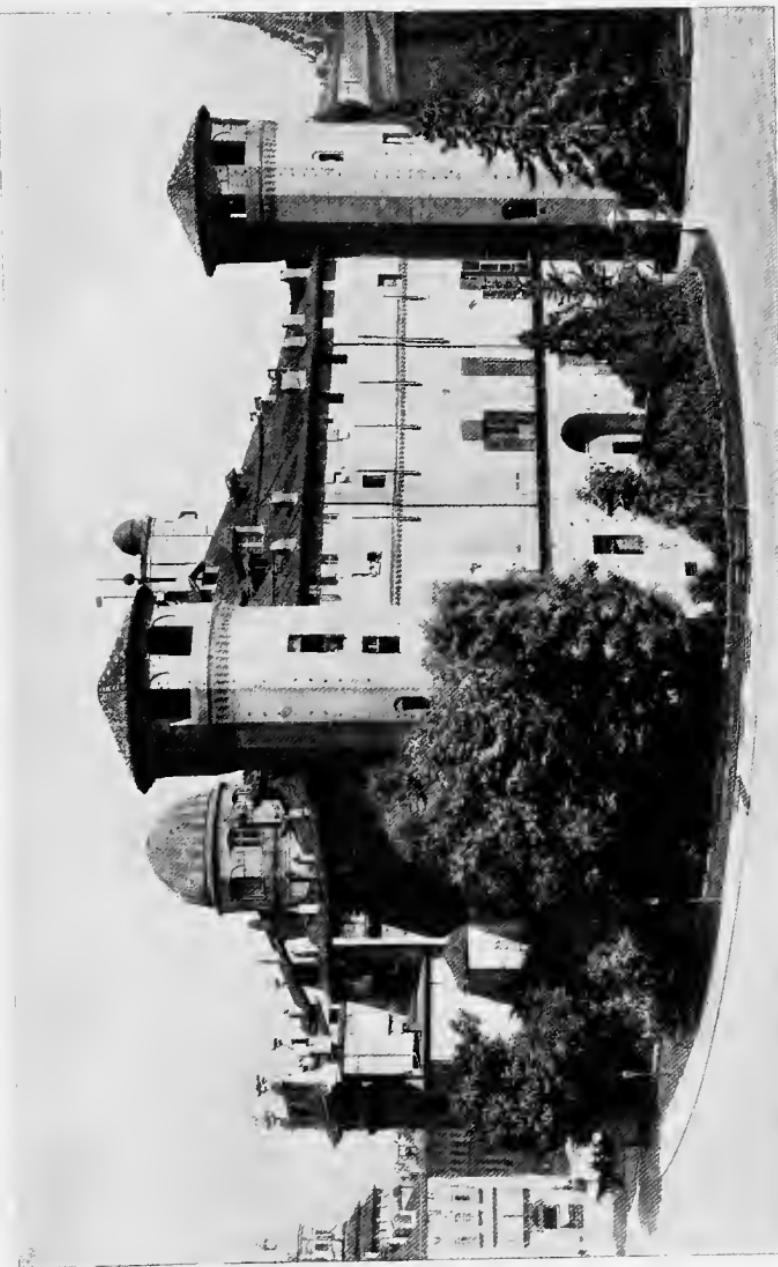
This piazza in the days of Augustus Cæsar comprised within its limits the greater part of the Augusta Taurinorum or Roman colony founded by the Emperor. In the centre is the Porta Romana and the remains of the Roman towers. In the latter half of the thirteenth century Guillaume de Montferrat, at that time lord of the place, roofed in the old Roman gateway and towers and built the large square construction called the Castello ; at the further end of the building he erected two other towers and an archway by which a thoroughfare is procured through the high-vaulted building from one side of the piazza to the other. This group of buildings retained the name of Castello until Madame Christine, the mother of Charles Emmanuel II., occupied it as her residence,

<sup>1</sup> *Anna di Savoia*, p. 68.

from which time it has always been known as Palazzo Madama. In the days that the mother of Victor Amadeus resided there she made many alterations in the palace. Amongst other improvements she constructed a magnificent double staircase, and redecorated the interior ; the fine marble balustrade that completes the façade was also put up under her directions in 1718 by Juvara, the noted Sicilian architect, who came to Turin in the suite of Victor Amadeus when the King returned to Piedmont after his short reign in Sicily. The rooms occupied by Madame Royale are now public offices ; the highly decorated salon and her bedroom, in which are portraits of the Princes of Savoy, are used as the Court of Appeal, and the largest room of all is left as when occupied by the Senate from 1848, when the constitution was proclaimed, to 1866, in which year the capital was transferred to Florence.

The palace inhabited by the Duke and Duchess, built in 1660, is a large, imposing building occupying two sides of the piazza. All the Offices of State, including the Archives, the King's Library, and the fine collection of armoury, are within the palace walls and communicate with each other by interior flights of stairs.

The Préfecture now occupies a large portion of the palace, and is connected to the wing inhabited by the royal family by a gallery of considerable length, by which the royalties have access to the performances at the Reggia or Theatre Royal.



*Photo, G. Brugnoli*

THE OLD CASTLE AND MADAME ROYALE'S PALACE IN THE PIAZZA CASTELLO, TURIN

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The cathedral that stands behind the palace also forms part of the royal domain, for a broad flight of stairs leads out of the guard-room, or large vestibule for attendants, into the sacristy, and from thence into the royal tribune in the Cappella del SS. Sudario.

All that has previously excited admiration or approval in the exterior or interior of the palace fades into nothing on entering the chapel, so beautiful in itself, containing the traditional Holy Shroud. A feeling of awe takes possession of those who pass into this imposing sanctuary, built by Charles Emmanuel II. in the seventeenth century for the reception of the venerated relic. In order to conform to his wish that the chapel should be as near as possible on a level with the state apartments of the palace, part of the apse of the cathedral had to be pulled down, by which means the Duke's desire was carried out.

The chapel is built of very dark brown marble, and contains tombs and statues erected by Charles Albert in 1842, to the memory of the most renowned Princes of his House. The contrast between the dark brown background throwing into relief the white marble statues is singularly striking, and the effect is all the more impressive from the fact that almost the only light in the chapel is that which permeates through a small aperture in the dome-shaped roof. This soft light enhances the mystery of deep shadow out of which emerge the white marble tributes to

heroes, and the one lamp burning before the altar, containing the sacred relic, intensifies the solemnity and silent repose of this devotional shrine.

The chapel stands behind the high altar at the elevation of thirty-seven steps. Viewed from the cathedral below, but little can be distinguished of it through the large glass casement that divides the chapel from the rest of the church. The dim flicker of the lamp alone recalls to the minds of the faithful the presence of the relic transported to Turin in 1578 from the chapel of the château at Chambéry by order of Emmanuel Philibert. Safe under the protection of the successors of his House, they prize it as their greatest treasure.

There is no need in these pages to refer to the controversy that now rages with renewed force on the rare occasions when the relic is exposed to the view of the public. In bygone days when the Shroud was brought from the Holy Land it had always been an undiscussed consolation for those of fervent belief, and only in these latter days has it raised dissentient voices. The principal occasions considered of sufficient importance to justify exposing it to view are those directly connected with the royal family, such as the opening of a new reign or the marriage of the head of the House.

The last time the Holy Shroud was shown was in 1898, the year of the Exhibition at Turin, opened by the late King Humbert, and, without wishing to venture an opinion on so sacred a subject, a few

details on the impressive scene from one who assisted at it in that year may not be without interest.

The writer, whose testimony has graciously supplied the following unpublished facts, relates that

“on the opening day of the ceremony the whole Court in full high dress, the ladies with their diadems and covered with jewels, took their places in the Chapel of the SS. Sudario. The Holy Shroud or Sindone,<sup>1</sup> by which name it is best known at Turin, was then, in the presence of the Court, stretched and fixed in a frame sufficiently long to allow the entire length, both the front and back, of the winding sheet to be exposed. It is nearly five metres long and over one metre in width. It was then brought down into the cathedral accompanied by all the clergy in most beautiful sacerdotal robes ; the Archbishop and three bishops and their clergy all wore the same magnificent vestments.

“The Sindone was placed in front of the high altar, after which the public were allowed to pass slowly by the holy relic. The loose webbing of the linen, more like the coarse cloth used for sails, and yet very pliable, is distinctly of the epoch, and it is evident that the body it enveloped had suffered crucifixion ; the irregular holes made by the crown of thorns, and the traces of the nails are clearly visible : the brown marks only cease in those parts where the linen was not in contact with the body.”

During the whole week that the Sindone was on view the troops formed a guard of honour in the

<sup>1</sup> From the Greek “sindon,” signifying linen or canvas.

church. Perhaps the most impressive hours of the moving ceremony were those from nightfall till dawn, when, as darkness gathered, the Sindone was lit up by myriads of lights, the rest of the cathedral being wrapped in the shades of night. During those hours when all communication with the outer world was closed, and only a very limited number of worshippers were admitted to the holy precincts, a vigil was kept all night by the young men of the highest Piedmontese nobility, who relieved each other at stated times during their long night watch. Dressed in plain evening dress, with solemnity and reverence they took up their position near the sacred relic, and like the crusaders of old, they jealously guarded the treasure entrusted to their keeping.

At the close of the functions, before the Sindone is replaced in the coffer from which it is taken, it is always carefully examined by the priests, and should the linen show any traces of needing repair, the privilege of mending it devolves on one of the royal Princesses. The last time it required repairing was when it was exposed on the occasion of the late King Humbert's marriage. The mending of the Sindone was undertaken by the King's sister, Princess Clotilde, who during the two hours it occupied her was on her knees, in view of four Piedmontese bishops ; the Princess worked with gold needles, which were subsequently distributed as relics.

The Sindone is then folded, or rather loosely rolled, to avoid cutting the linen, and is wrapped in crimson



### IL V.P. SEBASTIANO VALFRE

*Diua Congregat del Srat qdigeni si chiamava nel ibor  
dei S. G. d'Albenga, dove era arcivescovo se Noste  
S. Sebastiano. In cuius tempore et generatio in  
alta qualitate regnante, se n'ebbe un gran tem-  
pore di lusso e ricchezza.*

From "La S.S. Sindone," by G. Lanza, late Chaplain to H.M. the King of Italy  
By permission of the publishers, Roux e Viarcugo

THE DUKE AND DUCHESS OF SAVOY WORSHIPPING THE  
SS. SINDONE OR HOLY SHROUD



damask. After being laid in the chest sealed by the bishops with the royal arms, it is replaced within the altar, from whence it cannot be taken until such time as the Sovereign, in accordance with the Archbishop, proclaims his will that it should be exposed.

Previous to 1898 the Sindone had never been shown in the cathedral, nor for so many days in succession. Up to that date it had always been exposed in the piazza in front of the Palazzo Madama, and then only for an hour; otherwise, save for slight modifications, arising from the varying habits and customs of different epochs, the ceremony of six years since and those at which Anna Duchess of Savoy assisted in the seventeenth century, were one and the same.

It is authentically recorded in Monsignor Lanza's book on the Sindone, that Victor Amadeus and his wife were present in 1694, when the Reverend Father Valfrè, to whose special care the Sindone was confided, mended it himself. Whilst he was occupied in repairing the border Victor Amadeus requested the priest to give him a thread from the holy sheet. M. Valfrè obeyed the royal command, and handed to the Duke one of the threads. With deepest reverence Victor Amadeus accepted the relic, and always wore it round his neck enclosed in a golden heart, as a safeguard against all the dangers to which he was exposed.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *La Santissima Sindone*, p. 10, G. Lanza, late Court Chaplain to H.M. the King of Italy.

As Charles Emmanuel had died before the entire completion of the chapel, he left it to Victor Amadeus to continue his work and to put up the altar destined to contain the Sindone.

The altar was terminated in 1683, and the relic was moved from the temporary chapel in which it had been laid to its final resting-place. The ceremony of transporting it was attended with great solemnity. The *baldachino* or canopy under which it was carried from one chapel to the other was held by Victor Amadeus, the Prince de Carignan, and the great personages of Court.<sup>1</sup>

On many occasions the Duke showed how highly he prized the legacy handed down to his care from the days of his forefathers. When in camp at Pinerolo in 1693, he wrote to the same Father Valfrè to request him to offer incessant prayer at the altar of the "Santissima Sindone" for divine protection under the actual grave contingencies, by which his army might not only be enabled to defend his unhappy State, but would be granted success in repulsing the enemy's forces.<sup>2</sup>

He also drew up a formula to be used at the ceremonies connected with the Sindone, and occupied himself with all the details to be observed in the service of honour.

The Princesses of the House of Savoy had always shown themselves equally solicitous in their adoration of the holy treasure, and beautified and adorned

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 119.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 123.

the chapel either by works of their hands or in offering gifts.

The young Duchess, who from her childhood had been imbued with a deep sentiment of piety, was intensely affected at possessing the Sindone within her palace walls. Her essentially religious nature was easily moved by the mysticisms of her faith ; this consolation gave her courage to accept with cheerfulness the disappointments of her life, and enabled her to cultivate such rare unselfishness, that in her darkest hours of depression she never ceased, as in her brighter days, to shed happiness round her.

On her arrival in Turin the young bride was too much occupied with the official claims on her time to feel as home-sick as she feared would have been the case on finding herself in a land of strangers and new surroundings. One of the reasons that contributed to the ease with which she adapted herself to her new life was due to the essentially French character of the town and its inhabitants. The remark made, that the palace of the Dukes of Savoy might be described as the ante-chamber of Versailles, so strict was the supervision exercised over it by Louis XIV., was applicable in other respects than those relating to politics.<sup>1</sup> French was the language generally spoken, and to this day the Piedmontese are noted for the fluency with which they speak it. All travellers in their descriptions of Turin draw attention to the fact

<sup>1</sup> *Anna di Savoia*, p. 5.

that it forcibly brings Paris to their mind. These characteristics, Misson says in his *Voyage d'Italie*, of 1772, were not confined to the French style of buildings, but were observed even in the habits and customs of the Duke's Court, which he had been told was one of the most free and easy of Europe ; he also said he appreciated "the agreeable and sociable manners of the place, all the more from having come from less civilised parts of Italy, where he had seen more statues than men."<sup>1</sup>

The royal palace in the Piazza Castello does not by any means represent the most beautiful of the Ducal residences. On all sides within the compass of a few miles from the town there are charming country seats to which the Court constantly repaired, many of which are still inhabited by members of the royal family. The most striking of these is the Valentino, almost in the town itself, built by Christine of France. This fine building of the Renaissance stands above the banks of the Po in the centre of a large park, and was a favourite *villettiatura* of the royal family. The Veneria, built by Charles Emmanuel II. as a shooting-place, was somewhat farther away, and Moncalieri was at a like distance ; but it was not too far removed for Victor Amadeus to enjoy the beauties of this magnificent country seat and yet to be within easy communication with Turin for his affairs. From an historical point of view Rivoli remains the most interesting of these numerous

<sup>1</sup> *Voyage d'Italie*, Misson.



*Photo, G. Brogi*

THE PALACE OF THE VALENTINO, TURIN



properties and palaces. Within its walls many scenes in the life of Victor Amadeus took place. It was here that he signed the close of his mother's regency, and accepted the entire responsibility of the government of his country ; it was here that, after many years of most capable administration and a career of exceptional brilliancy, the sad scene of his abdication was witnessed, a step that led to such fatal consequences. It was also Rivoli that was set on fire in 1691 by the order of Catinat, from which catastrophe was drawn from Victor Amadeus the exclamation that willingly would he submit to the loss of his own palaces if only the enemy would spare the houses of his people.

The early days of the Duchess's married life represented all she could wish for. She visited with undisguised pleasure these numerous homes that were placed at her disposal, and showed the results of her finished education by just appreciations and observations on the fine works of art and paintings with which they were decorated. Her high standard of culture was specially observed in all the presentations and audiences in which she had to receive the officers of State and high dignitaries of the Church. It might have been supposed that these necessary formalities would have proved most tedious to a girl of fifteen, but, on the contrary, the Duchess, instead of considering the audiences in the light of a duty, received the various deputations with so much affability and graceful dignity that everyone remarked her wonderful

self-possession, and was surprised at her knowledge on so many different subjects.<sup>1</sup>

The *Gazette de France* announced that one of the foremost to compliment Madame la Duchesse on her arrival was the Papal Nunzio. "She also received the compliments of the Senate, the Chamber of Commerce, and other official bodies of the town. The Marquis de la Chiesa, President of the Chamber of Commerce, made a very fine speech. After this audience the Duke and Duchess were treated by Madame Royale to a magnificent banquet in her palace, and towards evening the Court went to the Valentino."<sup>2</sup>

The next audiences of some importance were those held in July, on the 9th of that month. "The Marquis Cusano was sent by the Comte de Melyar, Governor of Milan, to compliment the Duke of Savoy on his marriage. The envoy was received by H.R.H., by the Duchess, and Madame Royale, at the Veneria, to which place he had been brought in the Court carriages. The same day the envoy from the Duke of Parma came for a similar purpose, and the Abbé Pereira arrived from Lisbon to bring the official notice of the death of the Queen of Portugal."<sup>3</sup>

The Queen of Portugal's death had taken place in the month of December, 1683, but communications were not so easy in those days as now; therefore visits of congratulations or condolences were often

<sup>1</sup> *Anna di Savoia*, p. 69.

<sup>2</sup> *Gazette de France*, May 21st.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

not paid till long after the occurrence of the events to which they referred.

The recriminations that both Madame Royale and her sister had employed against each other on the rupture of the marriage of Victor Amadeus with the Infanta had caused a slight breach between them ; but not sufficient, however, to prevent the Queen of Portugal leaving a small legacy to Madame Royale, as we learn by the following paragraph of Court news, July 22nd :—

“ The Marquis Cusano had his farewell audience on the 16th of this month, and the next day he took his departure for Milan. On the 19th the Abbé Dom Francesco Pereira was escorted with the customary ceremonies to his first public audience with T.R.H., and again expressed his condolences on the death of the Queen of Portugal. He handed to Madame Royale some precious stones that the late Queen had left by her will to her sister. T.R.H. continue to reside at the Valentino.”<sup>1</sup>

The next envoy to arrive at Turin was the one from the Court of Great Britain. He was the bearer of hearty congratulations from Charles II., who expressed himself in terms of warmest friendship towards the Duke. Victor Amadeus was greatly pleased at the cordiality shown by a sovereign whose approbation he so highly valued ; and, in a letter of thanks for the King’s kindness, he referred to “ the glorious

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

alliance which attaches me more and more to the King's august person and indissolubly binds me by sentiments of respect and devotion. I will endeavour all my life through to merit Y.M.'s good graces. *Le camp de Pios, the 2. 7bre, 1684.*"<sup>1</sup>

Victor Amadeus was at this time camping out, having been called to the canton of Ceva to quell a disturbance, which, however, was of so little importance that as soon as he approached the scene of the tumult the sedition ceased, and the rebels laid down their arms. Previous to leaving Turin he had received the English envoy, "Milord Barkley," as he was termed in the Court news, which also stated that subsequent to the audience "the Duke of Savoy left at the head of his cavalry to encamp his troops near Cherasco."<sup>2</sup>

The Duchess had received an autograph letter from her uncle Charles II. on her marriage, and acknowledged his wishes for her happiness in the following terms:—

"MONSIEUR,—It was with the greatest joy and gratitude that I received your obliging letter remitted to me by Y.M.'s Envoy, Mr. Berkeley, who has also given me by word of mouth your felicitations on my marriage. Thereby I have a new proof of the friendship with which Y.M. honours me, and I humbly entreat that these sentiments so dear to my heart may be continued. I wish Y.M. to be persuaded that I shall count as so many moments of happiness every

<sup>1</sup> Record Office, folio 25.

<sup>2</sup> *Gazette de France.*

occasion that will present itself by which I shall show you, Monseigneur, with what respectful attachment

“I am your very humble and very affectionate  
“Niece and servant,

“ANNA.

“TURIN, *September 3rd, 1684.*”<sup>1</sup>

One of the Duke's earliest acts of justice at the opening of his reign had been to release his unfortunate friends, the Marquis de Pianezza and the Comte de Druent, from the prisons in which they had been confined ever since the day they had incurred Madame Royale's anger at being concerned in the plot for her arrest.

Victor Amadeus, partly from habit and partly from the wish to ingratiate himself with his mother, still showed her the deference that she formerly claimed from him, and before signing the order to liberate his friends asked her permission to do so. To this trait of courtesy on her son's part Madame Royale replied, with grace and dignity, “My son, when I renounced the reins of office, did I not at the same time renounce all resentment that may have influenced my actions?”<sup>2</sup>

The liberation of these two gentlemen, though only an action of ordinary justice, was a good deal commented on and often referred to, when on many occasions Victor Amadeus was considered to err on the side of exaggerated severity in the sentences he

<sup>1</sup> Record Office, folio 25.

<sup>2</sup> C. de Beauregard, p. 400, Appendix 6.

passed for misdeeds that demanded greater leniency. Often the wretched prisoners were kept shut up for years and years in the subterranean dungeons in the Castles of Miolans, Montmélian, Ceva, etc., waiting their trial, in many cases death alone coming to their release.

These castles were specially reserved for State prisoners and those of the nobility who had offended the Ducal dignity. In the Castle of Miolans one of the cells bore the significant name of “*l'inferno*” (hell), a description of which was written to Victor Amadeus by the Marchese di Bagnasco, who had been ordered to report on it, and said :—

“ I have visited amongst the other prisons the one that may well be called ‘*l'inferno*.’ The horror of it is indescribable. It is as ghastly owing to its depth underground as for the water that unceasingly trickles through it, by which those confined there are always wet through. There are other parts of this castle that would not be injurious to the health of the prisoners, and with little expense they would serve as prisons with equal security. I trust Y.R.H. will agree to this suggestion of mine for their welfare. Surely the echo of the prisoners’ cry, who repeatedly call out, ‘*Misericordia, misericordia*,’ will reach the ears of Y.R.H.”

The Marchese di Pianezza had been consigned to the Castle of Montmélian, one of the stongest fortresses in Europe, and though he had not been treated with such absolute neglect as some of his companions

in misfortune, he became so discouraged at the absence of tidings giving hopes of his release that the Governor of the prison wrote to inform the Duke in August, 1683, "The Marchese has great fear of being poisoned ; when his food is placed on the table he barely tastes it" : and again in September of the same year, the Governor, feeling the responsibility of his position, informed the ministers at Turin, "For over five days the Marchese di Pianezza has refused to eat anything, notwithstanding my entreaties. He repeats incessantly that he will not eat, and only wishes to die. He cries all night and most of the day."<sup>1</sup>

Pianezza, in despair, had appealed to France for assistance, but instead of the help and sympathy for which he hoped, he was reprimanded by Louvois, who, in severe terms, blamed his discouragement, and told him "the greatest stupidity a man could commit, was, to allow himself to die" ; but though the French Minister found no better consolation to offer to an old friend in distress, he contributed to his release by drawing the Duke's attention "to the disagreeable impression that would be created should Pianezza's imprisonment result in his death."<sup>2</sup>

Many traits were to be observed in Victor Amadeus showing a tendency to hardness, and as he advanced in age they assumed at times almost the proportions of cruelty. This defect may be said to have been

<sup>1</sup> *La corte e la società Torinese*, Claretta, p. 103.

<sup>2</sup> *Histoire de Louvois*, vol. iii. p. 175, C. Rousset.

partly due to his qualities. His education and inclinations had taught him to rely on himself only, and the close contact in which he had always lived with his army, besides inuring him to any hardships entailed by discipline, increased his predisposition to make light of difficulties, and fostered his contempt for those not endowed with the same insensibility as himself. Naturally of a violent temper, that showed itself, as a child, in outbursts of passion, the earliest proofs of his strong will were given by the severe control he imposed on himself as he left childhood behind him. Only the few who took the trouble to analyse his character knew that beneath the undemonstrative cold manner, the passionate nature was agitated by the same conflicting emotions as heretofore, and not having the former outlet of its violence, showed itself by harshness and a lack of sympathy.

The contradictions of the Duke's character formed a deeply interesting study to those closely connected with him, and the following portrait of his merits and failings, from the pen of one who knew him well, gives a clear notion of the ambiguity of his nature. The writer says :—

“ He was a Prince with many good and an infinite number of bad qualities ; he had a vivid imagination, wonderful memory, great facility for expressing his views, and serious application for affairs ; he was led by ambition and a love of fame, to which he was assisted by unusual dexterity in hiding his designs. He had but small sense of justice, or enlarged views

on things ; he possessed greater brilliancy than solidity, a bad heart and a strong feeling of hatred and ingratitude towards everyone ; his avarice was extended even to his mistresses ; he had but little knowledge or sense of religion ; his decisions were guided more by ostentation than unbiassed sincerity, and his judgment was perverted through his obstinacy ; above all he had a great love of his own opinions and contempt for those of others.”<sup>1</sup>

While allowing for a certain amount of exaggeration in this statement, the general appreciation of the Duke’s character was accurate in the abstract. The Abbé d’Estrades, French Ambassador to the Court of Turin, charged by Louis XIV. to keep him informed on every matter, however insignificant, that referred to the Duke of Savoy, seemed on many points to have formed the same opinion of Victor Amadeus. The Ambassador apparently thought the love of economy was a sufficiently important detail to report to his Sovereign, and three days after the arrival of Victor Amadeus in Turin with his bride, the Abbé wrote, “The Duke has all the necessary dispositions to lead him to acquire one day a great reputation, but he will always be very severe, and is moved by a greater spirit of economy than one would expect in a prince of his rank.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Relation de la Cour de Savoie, La Comtesse de la Verrue, Appendix, 238.* G. Léris.

<sup>2</sup> d’Estrades au Roi, 24 Mai, 1684, Archives de France.

Another curious relation on the same subject is supplied by Blondel, who many years later became the French Minister at Turin. He published an interesting collection of anecdotes on the daily events of the Court of Turin. In the following remarks he shows that Victor Amadeus never lost the simple and economical habits of his youth. Blondel states :—

“ During the seven years I have known him I never saw him otherwise than in a simple snuff-coloured suit without gold or silver trimmings, that he wore both winter and summer. His boots were thick double soled, in the summer he wore thread stockings, in the winter hosiery of a heavier make. He never wore any lace. His shirts were made of coarse linen trimmed with nainsook, he considered these the best for his health. Near the hilt of his rusty sword a piece of leather was attached to avoid the steel rubbing his coat. He always carried a cane, and a tortoiseshell snuff-box. The only part of his toilet in which he took some pride was his hat and wig, and as he walked a great deal he had in his wardrobe an overcoat of blue cloth cut like a frock coat that he wore on wet days. He only possessed one dressing-gown, it was of green silk lined with white bear-skin ; in the winter he wore it with the fur next him, and in summer he turned it inside out in order to be cooler. When at Turin, the expenses of his table were fixed at ten louis per head a day, but in the country they mounted to fifteen louis on account of the second table that it was often found necessary to provide for the ministers, the principal Court

functionaries, and the strangers. But this extra table was only served with the King's dessert after the royal dinner, though occasionally a few entrées and other dishes were added in order to make sufficient."

Although many comments were passed on the excessive parsimony of Victor Amadeus, undoubtedly it arose from feelings greatly to his credit. His two predominating passions were, his love for his people and the sense of what he considered due to them, and the martial spirit that he had inherited from his ancestors. In order to put into practice all the reforms and improvements on which he meditated, the finances of the country were such, that a most judicious administration in outlay and expenses was necessary. The prospect of a war in the future was the one thought that had by degrees completely taken possession of his mind, and he knew that financial prosperity was the primary necessity for embarking on a campaign. Most of his time at the Veneria was passed in reviewing his troops. He was often heard to say, that in the event of war he would lead his troops to battle, and those to whom he announced these intentions remembered that when he was only twelve years of age he had criticised his father, who had gone to war with the Republic of Genoa, but instead of assuming the command himself, had left it to his generals. "Never," exclaimed Victor Amadeus, "shall I make war without being myself at the head of my army, and I hope all my successors

will follow my example." In order to ascertain that necessary discipline was carried out in his army, the Duke often did the patrol himself, and made the round at night to see if the sentries were on duty; any negligence was not lightly passed over, and the delinquents were punished severely. One night as he was wandering about the streets of Turin alone he met a patrol, by whom he was stopped and put under arrest for being out after dark without a lantern, an order that every citizen was bound to observe. The Duke, seeing he was unrecognised, thought he would try the honesty of the men and offered them a bribe to let him off, but they were Swiss soldiers and indignantly refused any compromise against doing their duty. It was not till they were in the guard-room that they saw who their prisoner was, and greatly mortified at, and fearing the consequences of their error, they tried to excuse themselves. The Duke, however, quickly reassured them, and while putting a few pistoles in their hands, praised them for doing their duty, and said had they acted otherwise he would have had them severely punished.<sup>1</sup>

Many anecdotes were related of the Duke's nocturnal perambulations and romantic escapades. De Grandchamp states in his *Mémoires* that occasionally he was disguised, and was accompanied by two or three of his courtiers, but more often than not he was alone. The Duke let himself out by the door leading into the piazza by a secret stair, and was to be found in any

<sup>1</sup> Claretta, p. 63.

of the most obscure quarters of the town. De Grandchamp frequently met him between eleven and midnight, his sword under his arm and evidently bent on avoiding recognition, therefore, says De Grandchamp, “I always passed by the Duke without giving any signs of having seen him.”<sup>1</sup>

As years passed, though Victor Amadeus retained his former habits and never lost his love for freedom and horror for any restraint, the motives that dictated these preferences were no longer the same. He still pursued his lonely walks, and passed most of the time he could claim as his own in seclusion, but instead of the sentimental meetings that formerly lent such a charm to his midnight rambles, a wave of religious sentiment had temporarily replaced the adventures that might easily befall a young man as attractive as Victor Amadeus has been depicted to us by those who knew him. The writer who has given us his portrait says :—

“The Duke has inherited from the House of Nemours, fair hair, eyes of a wonderful shade of blue, and extreme vivacity. He is of medium height, slender, and well proportioned. His bearing denotes independence and fearlessness ; his aquiline features and his animated expression combine to complete a most striking picture.”

Although it was not likely that the solicitations of such an attractive personality would have fallen on

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62.

deaf ears, still now when Victor Amadeus was met in the lonely road between either Rivoli or the Veneria and Turin at the magic hour of midnight, instead of hurrying on to keep a tryst or rendezvous, he was too much absorbed in thinking of the subject on which he intended to confer with his Father Confessor, to notice anyone he passed on the way. On Christmas Eve he was known to have gone for several years in succession alone, and on foot, to assist at the three midnight Masses. Free from all pretension he took his place in the crowd, knelt with his people before the altar, and left the church with them. After one of these midnight services, before returning home Victor Amadeus went to the principal chemist of the town and, sitting down, entered into familiar conversation with him, and finally begged to be allowed to join him at breakfast.<sup>1</sup>

All these traits, denoting the Duke's love of simplicity and frugality, so condemned by the Court, made him most popular with the people. He never lost an occasion of identifying himself with their interests and pleasures, and they in return for these proofs of his confidence and trust, repaid him by their absolute devotion.

This somewhat complex character, in which there was so much to admire, as well as a good deal to condemn, was not that of a man particularly well suited to fill the position of husband, and certainly not the husband of a woman of Anna d'Orléans'

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64.

nature. During the first few months of married life she could ill conceal her impatience that Victor Amadeus should be so constantly called away to attend to business, and always rejoiced whenever he was able to throw off the burden of irksome etiquettes in the expectation that he would share her wish to pass his few leisure hours in each other's company. But this was not at all her husband's view, and by degrees the Duchess realised with a pang of regret, that absolute freedom was what best pleased him, and to be in her society was not the distraction that he required.

The French Ambassador had heard the whispered rumours of the indifference shown by Victor Amadeus towards his wife, and thought it right to acquaint Louis XIV. that the Duke's attentions to the Duchess were no longer so marked, and that he was paying court to the Comtesse de Prié. The Duchess appears, however, either not to have been aware of any rival in her husband's affections, or probably she had not been informed of the Comtesse de Prié's antecedents at her husband's Court.

At the time when Madame Royale determined at all hazards to distract her son's mind from deliberations that might induce him to dispense with her services as Regent, Mademoiselle di Saluzzo was one of the young ladies encouraged by Madame Royale to frequent the Court. As was expected, Victor Amadeus quickly fell a victim to the charms of an attractive girl with whom he was constantly thrown, and his attachment to her became so publicly criticised

that Madame Royale felt the responsibility she had incurred, and thought that to arrange a marriage between Mademoiselle di Saluzzo and the Comte de Prié, who was agreeable to the proposition, would be the best way of interrupting the intimacy that had assumed a more serious character than she had intended between her son and Mademoiselle.

From that time all the means previously employed by Madame Royale to attract Madame de Prié to Court were now used to procure her dismissal. Probably the report that Mademoiselle was related to the Marquis di Parella, who had been implicated in the proposed arrest of Madame Royale, had also influenced the Regent in her firm determination to put an end to the liaison between Victor Amadeus and Mademoiselle di Saluzzo.

Victor Amadeus was affected by the marriage of Mademoiselle di Saluzzo more than might have been expected, and he confided to the Marquis de la Trousse that it had made him very unhappy. This confidential statement on the part of the Duke was at once reported to Louvois, and a fortnight later La Trousse again wrote after Mademoiselle's marriage that "the attachment of the Duke for Madame de Prié seems stronger than ever."<sup>1</sup>

It was said that Louis XIV. expressed regret on the Duke's light conduct, but he wisely refrained from expostulating personally with Victor Amadeus, and reserved his remonstrances for matters of greater

<sup>1</sup> *Histoire de Louvois*, p. 280.

importance. As for Madame Royale, though she considered it diplomatic to express her disapprobation on her son's behaviour, she secretly triumphed that his marriage, to which she had been strongly opposed, should at so early a stage promise failure.

This first cloud that overshadowed the Duchess's young married life fortunately proved to be only temporary. Victor Amadeus had not yet attained the age when any serious consequences had to be feared from the attachments he formed, and in this present case he would have tired of Madame de Prié long before had he not wished to show his opposition to his mother. This was the principal motive that led him to insist on the Comtesse retaining the position she had previously enjoyed at Court.

One of the strongest reasons that deterred Victor Amadeus from attaching great importance to the love affairs of his leisure hours, was the necessity he felt for turning his attention to more serious claims on his time than the trifling episodes of his domestic life. Changes had lately taken place in the Court of Great Britain which merited some consideration. Charles II. had died in February, 1685, and was succeeded by his brother, James Duke of York. Sincere regret was felt at the Court of Turin at the death of the late King, who, whatever may have been his shortcomings in his own country, had been very true in his dealings with Victor Amadeus and his father. On the accession of James II. to the throne some uncertainty was felt as to the sentiments with

which he would regard Savoy ; for oppressed as she was by the pertinacious interference of France, it was a matter of great moment to her to be assured of Great Britain's dependability in case of need.

James II. did not enjoy his brother's popularity, and the rebellion raised by the Duke of Monmouth, his defeat at Sedgemoor, followed by his execution July 15th, 1685, were sad omens of disaster, and presented a gloomy outlook for the future.

All the events attendant on the rebellion were followed day by day with intense interest at the Court of Turin, and when it was finally crushed, the Duke forwarded his congratulations to the new monarch, and the Duchess also added the following lines of felicitation to her uncle :—

“ *MONSEIGNEUR*,—The great joy that I feel on the confusion of the enemy, and the defeat of the rebels, is inspired by my relationship and also by my personal feelings, the sincerity of which, I trust Y.M. is persuaded. I earnestly beg Y.M. to continue to bestow proofs of royal favour on one who is proud to sign herself, *Monseigneur*, Y.M.’s very humble and very affectionate niece and servant,

“ *ANNE*.<sup>1</sup>

Though it was to be regretted that congratulations had to be made on the termination of events by which the new reign was ushered in with so much bloodshed, James II. was sensible of the interest

<sup>1</sup> Record Office, folio 25.

taken in his affairs by his relations beyond the Alps, and in his answer to Victor Amadeus responded in friendly terms to the sentiments expressed by the Duke.

“MY BROTHER AND NEPHEW,—I received with great satisfaction the letter you wrote me concerning the defeat of the rebels. The part that you take in this happy success of my troops, of such importance to my country, is a most agreeable proof to me of your friendship. I beg you to be assured that I value it as I ought, and that it will be a pleasure to me on all occasions to show you the consideration I have for your person. I am sincerely,

“My brother and nephew,

“Your very faithful brother and uncle,

“JAMES R.

“WHITEHALL, 19th November, 1685.”<sup>1</sup>

These proofs, showing that James II. was quite prepared to be on friendly terms with his niece and her husband, were all the more valuable, as at the time of writing, France was making herself more unbearable than usual to Savoy.

Louis XIV. was quite determined that Victor Amadeus should recognise that the honour conferred on him by his marriage with the King's niece entailed innumerable obligations to France on the part of Savoy.

Louis XIV. considered that the Duke had not

<sup>1</sup> State Archives, Turin.

sufficiently grasped the fact that the alliance with a Princess of France had solely been agreed to in order to give the King the right to dictate as a relation on all the steps taken by Savoy. Louis XIV. intended to lose no opportunity of impressing this fact on the Duke's mind, and one now arose of showing Savoy that she must resign herself to be under the control of France.

During the autumn of 1685 the Abbé d'Estrades casually mentioned, as a matter of no importance, in one of his letters to the French Court, that he had heard a report of the Duke's intention to pass a few weeks in Venice. It would hardly be supposed that this unofficial piece of news could have excited the suspicions of France, yet as soon as the letter mentioning this report was received in Paris, a courier was hastily despatched to Turin to tell the Abbé, in most peremptory terms, that the contemplated journey of Victor Amadeus could not possibly be admitted ; it must be energetically opposed, otherwise the King would send seven or eight thousand troops across the Alps in order to show that he intended to be obeyed. At the same time secret agents were sent to Mantua and Venice to keep a strict watch over all the strangers who arrived in either town. The Abbé on reading this stern mandate was rather puzzled as to how he should act. He considered that there was too great a disproportion between what was looked on by the King as an offence and the measures taken to prevent it. The Ambassador had to exercise all

his skill as a diplomatist in his audience with the Duke in order to throw out hints sufficiently strong to deter him from pursuing the idea of a journey to Venice, and at the same time not so menacing as to alarm him, for knowing the Duke's independent character, d'Estrades feared he might lead to precisely the result that Louis XIV. wished to avoid.

Victor Amadeus listened attentively to the Ambassador's advice, and being well aware that the Abbé's words of warning contained far more than the astute diplomatist thought prudent to reveal, he showed himself to be quite on an equality in the art of diplomacy, and without betraying the slightest annoyance, he begged the Ambassador to reassure the King that even had he contemplated the journey, he would certainly have considered it due to the Court of France to have acquainted them previously of his intentions ; and now that he had heard that it would be displeasing to Louis XIV., he would dismiss all thoughts of leaving Turin from his mind.<sup>1</sup>

Soon after this occurrence, when Victor Amadeus had thus wisely complied with the exigencies of Louis XIV., the King, gaining confidence by the apparent submission of the Duke, seized a further occasion for interference in family matters on hearing a report of the Prince de Carignan's approaching marriage.

Prince Emmanuel Philibert de Carignan was uncle to Victor Amadeus, and the head of the family

<sup>1</sup> *Histoire de Louvois*, vol. iii. p. 282.

of Carignan, that had divided into two branches, the younger of which had settled in Paris after the marriage of Prince Thomas de Carignan, a son of Charles Emmanuel I., with a daughter of the Comte de Soissons. Prince Emmanuel Philibert was up to this time heir to the Duchy of Savoy.

The Prince, who was past fifty and deaf and dumb, had never contemplated taking such a step, but the reiterated persuasions of both his mother, the old Princesse de Carignan, and his sister, the Princess of Baden, drove him to asking the hand of Catherine d'Este, Princess of the Court of Modena.

In spite of his infirmities, the Prince enjoyed great popularity. He was considered an authority in State affairs, and was a renowned politician. After long and assiduous studies with a Spanish priest he was able to pronounce a few intelligible words, and attained so high a proficiency in the knowledge of languages and various branches of science that no surprise was felt when it was known that the Princess of Modena had accepted his offer.

The arrangements for the marriage had been hurried on to avoid any disagreeable observations from the Court of Versailles, and were almost concluded when news arrived from France that Louis XIV. was seriously annoyed that the marriage should have been arranged without his consent, and he requested that Victor Amadeus should at once stop the proceedings and prevent the ceremony from taking place.

The predicament in which the Duke now found

himself placed was harder to solve than the one that had arisen in his projected journey to Venice. On that occasion he had solely his own interests to consult, whereas now the future of his uncle, for whom he had great affection, was in dispute ; but, though it was repugnant to him to show any discourtesy to the Prince, he also felt the awkward position in which he was placed with France.

After considering the best way in which he could conciliate Louis XIV. and yet not assume too arbitrary a tone towards his relative, he approached his uncle and tried his best to persuade him that as the special cause of the King's disapproval of his marriage apparently arose from the choice of the bride, the best course for the Prince to follow would be to leave it in the hands of Louis XIV.

The Prince de Carignan, however, who, not being influenced by the same reasons as Victor Amadeus, had no intention to submit to the Court of France, was not at all amenable to this suggestion. He said he had selected his bride as she was an Italian Princess, and therefore would easier conform to his habits than a stranger, who might also find it more difficult to understand his imperfect means of expressing himself. He further remarked that as Louis XIV. had been chiefly instrumental in the marriage of James II. of Great Britain with Mary Beatrice of Modena, it was impossible that now he could have any valid objection to oppose to an alliance with a Princess of the same house.

The Prince, very much annoyed and upset, refused to pursue the subject with his nephew, and retired to his country seat of Racconigi ; the preparations for the marriage were held in abeyance, the Duke's formal consent to it was withheld, and France again congratulated herself on the authority she had established in the Court of Savoy, when suddenly the rumour spread that whilst France imagined that her will had been obeyed, Catherine d'Este had secretly joined the Prince de Carignan at Racconigi, where the marriage had taken place privately.

The King's anger on verifying this news was as much due to the resentment he felt that his orders should have been treated with contempt as to the event itself. In terms of great haughtiness he said that he would show the Duke of Savoy that the greatest monarch in the world could not be treated with impunity. Subsequent events showed that Louis XIV. did not mean to content himself with threats only towards the Court of Savoy.<sup>1</sup>

The first victims of his anger were the old Princesse de Carignan and the Princess of Baden ; the former was forbidden to present herself at Court, and the Princess of Baden was ordered to retire to Rennes for as long a period of time as suited the King's pleasure ; the representative of the Duke of Modena at the Court of Versailles was also requested to leave Paris, and Victor Amadeus received peremptory injunctions to compel the Prince and his wife to

<sup>1</sup> *Histoire de Louvois*, p. 283.

quit Turin, and to declare his marriage null and void.

Victor Amadeus complied with the first part of the King's commands, but he refused to take so serious a step as to annul the marriage without consulting those more competent than himself to give an opinion on canonical laws. An assembly of ecclesiastics was formed under the presidency of the Archbishop of Turin, and after due deliberation the clergy unanimously declared that the marriage could not be annulled ; it was perfectly legal, and any children born of the marriage would be the Prince de Carignan's lawful successors.<sup>1</sup>

Great irritation was felt in Turin by the departure of the Prince and Princess for Bologna, the town decided on for their exile, in the depth of the winter. They left in the month of November, a few days after their unfortunate union, and as the people saw the long procession of carriages and conveyances containing the little court and all their household gods, murmurs were heard on every side against the injustice that compelled Savoy still to be under the stern dominion of France.

If the people were oppressed by their inability to shake themselves free from her iron grasp, how much more did Victor Amadeus rebel at having to submit to her control ! Even the pardon, eventually granted to his cousin by Louis XIV. after having banished him from his home for many months, gave the Duke

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 284.

no satisfaction, but on the contrary he experienced a renewed mortification that he should be in the humiliating position of having to receive good as well as evil from a country he so disliked.

It was unavoidable that these bitter thoughts harboured by Victor Amadeus against his bondage should be most painful to his wife. Though he could not actually accuse her of being the cause for the increased interference of France in the concerns of Savoy, she was made to feel that undoubtedly her marriage with Victor Amadeus had encouraged France to assume a right to dispose of their destiny, and her relationship with the King was used as a pretext to interfere in all the affairs that related to Savoy, both great and small.

The Duchess felt that each fresh insult from France seemed to estrange her more and more from Victor Amadeus. After every rebuff he threw himself with renewed energy into his military pursuits, by which she was robbed of his company, and, engrossed in his assiduous work, he seemed entirely to forget that he had a young wife who claimed some of his time. The Duchess, partly by timidity, but still more through her unselfishness, kept from him her intense longing to win his confidence and affection, and feared to drive him still further from her should she appear to insist on his companionship.

Victor Amadeus pursued this line of indifference he had adopted towards his wife till the birth of their first child, December 6th, 1685. The Duchess was

so ill on this occasion that great fears were entertained for her life, and Monsieur was informed that his daughter had received the Viaticum. By dint of careful nursing, and chiefly through the attentions the Duke now lavished on his wife, the danger was averted, and the Duchess was soon convalescent. During the whole time of her illness the Duke was reported as having fulfilled the duties of "a good husband and good father. He had put a small camp bed in his wife's room in order to sleep there and attend to her requirements ; he also showed great interest in the little Princess, and often went to see how she was."<sup>1</sup>

Though an heir would have been more welcome, and some disappointment was felt on the birth of the Princess, yet she was the subject of many congratulations to the Court of Turin. On December 27th the child was baptised under the names of Marie Adélaïde. Madame Royale and the Prince de Carignan held her at the font, and the Marquise de St. Germain was appointed her governess.

A new joy had sprung up in the Duchess's heart on receiving so many unexpected proofs of her husband's attentions, because he seemed to have shaken off all the annoyances of foreign politics that so seriously affected his temper. No longer morose and preoccupied, his principal thought was how he could best please his wife, and in order to afford her some distractions suited to her age, Victor Amadeus

<sup>1</sup> *Anna di Savoia*, p. 95.

decided to give large balls in the ducal palace every Sunday of Carnival, and twice during the week smaller dances took place alternately in the Duchess's apartments and in those of Madame Royale.

In each despatch to Paris great stress was laid on the Duke's model behaviour as husband and father, and there was no reason that this favourable change in the Duke's demeanour towards his wife should not have continued if France had not again interfered in imposing on Savoy, against her will, the cruel persecution of the Waldenses, which again broke up the home life, and was the beginning of a long estrangement between the Duke and Duchess.

## CHAPTER VIII

### IN THE WALDENSIAN VALLEY

The Waldensian colony—Their foundation by Petrus de Valdo—Their peaceful lives in the valleys near the Mont Cenis—The incursions of foreign troops—The simple faith of the people—The revocation of the Edict of Nantes—Cruelties of the dragonnades—Louis XIV. meditates attacking the Waldenses—He urges the Duke of Savoy to act in concert with him—Victor Amadeus demurs—He is forced by Louis XIV. to comply—Catinat enters the valleys with his army—Desperate resistance of the Waldenses—Massacres on the mountain sides—Needless cruelties inflicted on the people—Overcrowding of prisons round Turin—The return of Victor Amadeus from the war—His depression—His determination to shake himself free from France—His decision to go to Venice—He names the Duchess his administrator during his absence—The Treaty of Augsburg.

MANY centuries ago a small colony founded by Petrus de Valdo made their home in the Alps that divide France from Italy, and settled in the valleys between Monviso and the Mont Cenis. The founder of the “pauvres de Lyons” or the Waldenses, from whom they derived their name, was a rich merchant of Vaux, near Lyons, who in 1170 sold everything he possessed for the benefit of the poor and instituted the simple doctrines of his religious faith.

The example he himself gave of abnegation, and the simplicity of his own life, appealed to the ingenuous nature of the honest mountaineers, who as time went on were recognised for their exemplary

conduct and their quiet and peaceful habits. They asked nothing of anyone, never importuned their neighbours, and without obtruding their credence on others, contented themselves with handing down from father to son the tenets of their simple faith.

It might have been supposed that these honest peasants, whose ambitions were confined to improving the conditions of their homesteads and working in community for the good of the country they loved, might have lived and died unmolested by far more important States ; but the peaceful tenor of their existence excited the envy of those countries who, for the sake of gain and glory, were perpetually immersed in feuds and wars. This envy turned to hatred when disciplined armies sent to wage trouble amongst them were repulsed by unsophisticated villagers inured to hardships, who vigorously disputed the attacks directed against their homes. For the space of three centuries the Waldenses were the prey to invidious assaults commencing from the days of Innocent VIII. in 1488, whose troops were the earliest to disturb the peaceful existence of those dwelling in the happy Waldensian valleys. These unjust attacks were carried on two hundred years later by the Duke of Savoy Charles Emmanuel II., on which occasion the courage of the Waldensian leader, Capitano Ianavel, handed his name down to fame for his heroic resistance of the Duke's repeated attacks, with the assistance of 600 of his compatriots.

Every stone and rock of these mountains and

valleys has a tale of its own to tell, and at no season of the year were the Waldenses secure against invaders. In fair weather or foul, under the leaden sky of winter when the ice-bound torrents and the rippling rivulets were silent, and icicles like frozen tears fringed every rock and bank, or during the glowing heat, when the tears of winter gave place to the smiles of summer, the cascades sparkled and bounded once more, and the lilt of birds was heard in the flowering shrubs ; at all times and seasons the Waldenses were exposed to the devastations of regular troops, volunteers, crusaders, and banditti, for whom any pretext was valid to molest the rural population.

The most populated of the little hamlets were situated in the valleys of Angrogna, Luzern, S. Martino, and Perosa, but it is in the valley of Angrogna that the most glorious memories survive of acts of heroism and devotion : consequently it is held the most sacred by the Waldenses, who call it “the heart of the valleys.” The entrance to it is so narrow that it represents more a pass than a valley, and the gloom and mystery hanging over the defile makes it easy to picture the harrowing scenes with which it is associated. These first impressions of sad reminiscence are only dispelled by the reality of present well-being on proceeding further up the valley ; the narrow gorge suddenly opens and the eye is at once directed to three peaks of rocks of progressive height, on each of which stands a church : on the highest and lowest

peaks are Waldensian places of worship, and a Roman Catholic Church stands between them.

Though bitter had been the anguish, and grievous the woe, halcyon days succeeded the long period of darkness, and at the present time both pastors and priests live on terms of mutual esteem, whilst their example encourages the Catholic and Waldenses peasantry to work together in harmony. When a Waldenses dies he is followed to his resting-place by his Catholic friends, who in their turn receive the same tributes of respect from the simple Lutherans, when death levels all grades and reduces mortals and creeds alike to dust.

In the early days following the foundation of their faith, before any churches had been built, the Waldenses used to assemble under the shade of fine spreading chestnut trees, called by them their "national trees," in order to hear the preaching of their *barba*, or pastor. In the *patois* of the country the word *barba* signified "uncle," and the people familiarly applied it to their old pastors, from which they gained for themselves the sobriquet of *barbets*. It has now fallen into disuse, but formerly, when the French spoke of the *barbets*, they used it as a disparaging term to denote the armed peasants of the Alps.

A white sheet spread on the ground was the recognised signal to announce the pastor's arrival, and denoted the spot where he would stand to address the villagers, who gathered together in groups to listen

to his discourse. It was under a group of chestnuts in the valley of Angrogna that a famous Synod took place in 1532. Besides pastors from various parts of the Alps, numerous followers of the faith congregated from distant colonies to attest their adhesion, and in seventeen articles they drew up a declaration of their belief which, united with those of the twelfth century at the time of the first foundation of their sect, have remained the basis of the Waldensian creed. It was also under this same group of trees that, a century and a half later, a not less interesting meeting, presided over by Henry Arnaud, the captain of the oppressed and down-trodden mountaineers, took place, who, on hearing the merciless edict issued by Victor Amadeus II., with anxious faces and tears of distress, discussed whether to sacrifice their country or their lives.

But if the valley of Angrogna is haunted by gloomy recollections, the Waldenses are not unmindful of the happier dawn that dispelled long nights of sorrow, and the anniversary of their emancipation by Charles Albert in 1848 is never forgotten by the grateful peasants. On that day the churches are filled to overflowing, the boys from the different schools march to the service headed by the masters and followed by their relations ; and at the close of the pastor's address psalms are sung and poetry declaimed, after which both masters and scholars then perambulate the village streets with fifes and drums ; to each boy is given a pamphlet recording the

glorious deeds of his forefathers. As evening falls over the valley, bonfires burn on every hill, after which the more sedate of the villagers scatter in happy groups bound for their homes, and the stillness of the afterglow is only broken by the voices of peasants chanting evening hymns as they wind their way up the narrow tracks, past foaming waterfalls and placid streams, to their cottage doors. Many of the younger folk are loath to end the day that they have been brought up to commemorate as the commencement of their peace and prosperity, and as the moon slowly rises above the mountains the boys and girls collect round a large space, in the centre of which is a raised platform, and begin to dance to the strains of village fiddles. More sentimental couples wander away from their companions, and in the still calm of the moonlight, to the purling accompaniment of the brook, the melodious cadence of one of their favourite *stornello*, or folk-songs, murmured by a young peasant to a village maiden, falls gently on the ear :—

“ O rondanina bella,  
Sei una traditora ;  
Ti sei messa a cantare  
Che non era ancora l’ora.”<sup>1</sup>

In referring to olden days, it is but just to recognise that on several occasions a great deal of pressure had to be employed with the Dukes of Savoy

<sup>1</sup> *Alle Porte d’Italia*, de Amicis. Roma, 1884.

to persuade them to acts of violence against a people who had an innate devotion to the royal House. Had it not been that the patience of the Waldenses was overtaxed, and that through constant provocation their former affection for Savoy gave way to a sense of antipathy towards the Duchy, the Princes of that country, instead of finding a desperate foe, would have had the staunch support of men who, with no other ambition than the love of Prince and country, would have fought for them to the last ; but the inability of Savoy during the early part of her history to act upon her own initiative, resulted in disasters to herself and injustice towards those who had a right to her protection, and this led to the alienation of their sympathy. . .

The terrible events of Eastertide, 1655, under Charles Emmanuel II., called by the Protestants the *pasque piemontesi*, were fomented by Cromwell in order to maintain his influence abroad. He found means to kindle a religious quarrel between the Duke of Savoy and his Protestant subjects which produced such an irritation on either side that the fierce measures adopted by the Duke and his Government are still remembered under that name. A strong feeling of resentment was created in England, and a general cry of horror was raised against the ferocities committed by the Duke's army. Cromwell was the foremost to express his indignation at the events taking place in the Duke's states, and sent an envoy to Savoy to claim redress. He calculated that in all

probability the Duke would refuse to grant this request, and in view of his refusal the Protector had bribed the Protestant cantons of Switzerland to be in readiness to enter Savoy with ten thousand armed men. It was due to Mazarin that this adroitly laid plan was foiled ; he had been informed of Cromwell's stratagem and prevailed on the Duke of Savoy to comply with the Protector's demands.<sup>1</sup>

Subsequent to this last persecution the Waldenses enjoyed for thirty years a period of uninterrupted repose, and no doubt this respite from attacks would have been prolonged had not Louis XIV. seized the occasion of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes to draw Victor Amadeus into a war with his Protestant subjects. With merciless hands all the Protestant churches were destroyed in France, terrible cruelties were inflicted by the "dragonnades," and fifty thousand families were dispersed in every part of Europe seeking for shelter where they could best hope to find it.

That other countries should offer protection to any of his subjects he had chosen to chase from France, was a rebuke that Louis XIV. did not admit, and as by far the greater number of refugees had fled to the Alps, the King thought this a favourable opportunity of reminding Victor Amadeus that Piedmont was still but a province dependent on France.

Each day the overflow of French Protestants increased in the country surrounding Savoy, and on

<sup>1</sup> Green's *History of England*, vol. iii. p. 1267.

October 12th, 1685, Louis XIV. opened a correspondence with Victor Amadeus to draw his attention to this fact and to express his displeasure that so many French subjects should be permitted to find homes in the mountains and valleys bordering on Savoy. The King pointed out to the Duke that if this state of things continued it would lead to disaffection in Dauphiné, and would encourage revolts amongst the people of that province. To avoid this result the King stated that he had given orders to the Governor of Pinerolo to take measures which would lead to the conversion of all the inhabitants of the valleys under his command, and as these valleys marched with the Duke's territories, Louis XIV. counted on his co-operation to secure the adherence of all his subjects to the old faith.<sup>1</sup>

Victor Amadeus felt great irritation that Louis XIV. should push his pretensions of tutelage to the point of forcing on him so distasteful a task as that of interfering with the religious beliefs of his subjects, and he requested d'Arcy, who had succeeded d'Estrades as French Ambassador to the Court of Turin, to represent to His Majesty that he could take no decision without mature consideration, as his experience of former attempts made by his predecessors to dictate to their subjects on this question had always led to disastrous results in the country.

After despatching this reply, in which the Duke's spirit of opposition was very evident, Victor Amadeus

<sup>1</sup> Carutti, p. 82.

thought it advisable to show a certain amount of compliance to the King's imperious demands, and in the hopes that by so doing the matter would be allowed to slide, he issued an edict prohibiting the Waldenses from offering protection to the French refugees, and commanded those already in Piedmont who should not consent to abjure their faith within eight days to leave the country.

But if Victor Amadeus hoped that this compromise, by which he avoided taking severe steps against the homeless outcasts, would satisfy the arbitrary insistence of Louis XIV., he was soon undeceived by the letter from the Court of Versailles, dated November 10th. Great surprise was expressed in this letter that the Duke of Savoy should hesitate to do what was required of him, and d'Arcy was told that at all costs it was expected that the Duke would conform to the decision of the King of France to turn his subjects back into the true Church. Should Savoy not have sufficient troops for what was required of her, d'Arcy must reassure the Duke that the King was ready to offer any necessary aid to assist such a pious undertaking.

Victor Amadeus saw that France was determined to pursue the subject on which she had entered with such zeal, and he quite understood the menace that was conveyed under the proposal of the assistance of the French troops; he considered in this grave state of affairs that to gain time and to say as little as possible was the only course for him to pursue. He therefore

contented himself with thanking d'Arcy for the interest the King took in the affairs of Savoy, and said he had every reason to hope that in due time his Protestant subjects would conform to the Church of Rome. The Ambassador added that wishing to be further enlightened as to the Duke's intentions, he had spoken to President Truchi, but the President denied any cognisance of the state of affairs, in which he had never been consulted by H.R.H. ; but he himself doubted that he would ever agree to use armed force against his subjects.

On reading this report from his Ambassador, Louis XIV. was unable to find words strong enough to express his indignation. He could hardly believe it possible that he, who was recognised by all the countries of Europe as paramount in every question of political policy, should be confronted by a young man of twenty, absolutely ignorant on the art of government, and who was only suffered by France to be head of a state on the consideration that it had always been looked on as an appurtenance of the French kingdom. Louis XIV. felt that such a state of things must not be tolerated for a single instant, and throwing aside all tone of request, he wrote on 7th December to d'Arcy in the following peremptory terms :—

“ I see that your negotiations are quite ineffectual. All the same you are to tell the Duke that as long as he allows the Huguenots to live on the confines of his estates, his authority is not sufficient to prevent the

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desertion of my Calvinist subjects. He can judge for himself that I shall not permit matters to remain as they are, and as I shall probably suffer some annoyance from the insolence of these heretics, it is just as likely as not that he will find an alteration in my sentiments towards him, which hitherto have been most friendly. I am confident that the Duke will seriously reflect over what I have said."<sup>1</sup>

Victor Amadeus looked round in despair for a tangible support in this hour of doubt and perplexity. He seemed hemmed in on all sides by inimical forces, and his better feelings of humanity and justice were opposed, both at home and abroad, by antagonistic influences driving him to act against his conscience. In Piedmont there was no sympathy for the Waldenses, the whole of Italy had viewed with horror the strides Protestantism had made, and the Catholics were turning to account this opportunity of arresting the progress of unorthodox belief and worked assiduously to stimulate this feeling.

In his own home Madame Royale made it impossible for him to take a dispassionate view of the situation. She was intent in her determination to forward the desires of Louis XIV. and to spread dissension in the household. The total absence of all feeling shown by Madame Royale in exciting sentiments that she knew would result in unjust warfare was still further confirmed by her own words in a

<sup>1</sup> Carutti, p. 84.

letter she wrote to Madame de la Fayette on the termination of the war, in which the following passage occurs :—

“ The valleys are very extensive and were thickly populated. It is necessary to clear them entirely and not to leave a single inhabitant. You can understand that all this requires a good deal of care, as they are people who are easier vanquished than found, owing to the way they fly from one mountain to another, and hide themselves in places that are almost impenetrable.”<sup>1</sup>

Overwhelmed by the responsibilities of the dilemma in which he was placed, Victor Amadeus turned his eyes to England, but even that country seemed temporarily alienated from his interests, and owing to the new régime was unable to afford him the friendly support of which he stood so much in need. By all accounts James II., who had opened his reign by fighting against his Protestant subjects, intended to maintain his faith, regardless of the laws of the country. The reports from England related many incidents which clearly proved his resolve to follow his own dictates.

The Papal Nunzio at Turin, who under the influence of France was coerced into working in her interests, turned to advantage any news from the Court of St. James that might hasten the Duke's decision to take part in the anti-Protestant movement.

<sup>1</sup> 4 Mai. *Histoire de Louvois*, vol. iv. p. 23.

Among other incidents, it was reported that James II. had replaced all his Protestant servants by Catholics, and that the Master of the Horse had been deprived of his office because at a dinner at which His Majesty's health was drunk he had said, "May God bless the King, but the devil take him who made His Majesty a papist."<sup>1</sup> On another occasion the Nunzio was informed that H.B.M. had sent for the Bishop of London and found fault that the clergy of the Church of England should permit themselves to preach against the Catholic religion. The King ordered that a stop should be put to this, otherwise, he added with a threat, he knew what means to employ. The Nunzio was specially pleased to be able to relate that a paper had recently come to light which confirmed one published a few days before the death of Charles II. ; in this paper all doubts on the King's conversion were removed, as in it His Majesty declared that the only religion recognised by him was that of St. Peter.<sup>2</sup>

This last affirmation, and the arguments used to prove James II. right in the modes he employed to force his people into subjection, carried a good deal of weight with Victor Amadeus. Weary of the whole subject, tormented and worn out by the single-handed fight, on January 12th he acquainted d'Arcy that he consented to revoke any former concessions that had been made in favour of the Waldenses.

<sup>1</sup> *Letters from the Nunzios*, Vatican Archives, folio 104.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

On receiving this important intimation from his Ambassador, the satisfaction felt by Louis XIV. on the prospect of exterminating the Protestants seemed secondary to the triumph he experienced at having obtained the upper hand over the young Duke, and in order to bring matters to a conclusion he begged d'Arcy to represent to H.R.H. that half-measures would be useless, and that he must order the destruction of the churches, prohibit the religious worship of the Protestants, and send troops into the valleys.<sup>1</sup>

On the 31st of January the Protestants of all countries, and especially those of Switzerland, who had anxiously followed the discussions that related to their weal or woe, were grievously distressed on reading the edict issued by Victor Amadeus on the model of that proclaimed by France. A meeting was hurriedly convoked at Bâle, and it was decided to send two Swiss envoys to Turin without delay, to intercede for their unhappy compatriots. Victor Amadeus on hearing their petitions and prayers could only reply that he had given his word to Louis XIV. and was unable to break his engagement; but he advised the envoys to obtain the submission of the Waldenses, or if they refused to follow this suggestion, to urge them to leave the country before the outbreak of hostilities.

Unfortunately this friendly admonition on the part of the Duke encouraged the Waldenses to send the

<sup>1</sup> Carutti, p. 84.

envoys a second time to Turin to report that the Protestants declined either to recant their faith or to abandon the land of their fathers ; but should force compel them to do so, would the Duke guarantee both that their departure should be effected without molestation and grant them the faculty of selling their properties ?

The Duke, harassed on all sides and anxious to bring matters to a crisis, answered with some irritation that he had no intention of treating with armed subjects ; let them first submit to his wishes, and then he would consider the subject of emigration.

Many weeks had sped by in these altercations, and Catinat, the Governor of Casal, to whom Louvois had given the command of the French troops, complained bitterly to the French Minister on the interminable delays. As soon as Catinat had been informed of his command he had gone to Turin early in March to learn from the Duke his opinion on the plan of attack, and questioned him as to the strength of the enemy, and what means of defence they were likely to employ ; but Victor Amadeus either could not or would not give the French General any instructive information, and Catinat wrote to Louvois : “ The Duke appeared totally wanting in decision, in assurance, and in strength.”<sup>1</sup> When, therefore, at the end of the month the Swiss envoys were still negotiating with the Duke, Catinat had serious suspicions that

<sup>1</sup> *Histoire de Louvois*, vol. iv. p. 10.

Victor Amadeus, even at the last hour, would evade taking part in the expedition, and it was with cruel delight that he saw the Waldenses themselves leading to the war that the Duke had done his best to avoid.

The factitious attempts to postpone what was inevitable only added to the growing irritation of all parties concerned. The Waldenses had become more obstinate as they saw they were abandoned by the Duke, and though at night they met to sing psalms and pray for the prosperity and spread of their religion, during the day they were busily engaged in barricading all the passes, and taking dispositions as to the tactics to be employed.

After having made a last ineffectual attempt to force the Waldenses to submission, on April 22nd Victor Amadeus put himself at the head of his troops and marched to the attack. The combined forces of France and Savoy amounted to about eight thousand men, almost double the number of the Waldenses under arms. Catinat had been informed that the valleys to be attacked were those of Luzern, San Martino, and Angrogna. It was stated that this last-named valley would be the chief point of resistance, as a great number of Waldenses had, with large supplies of ammunition and provisions, abandoned their villages, and were massed together in the valley of Angrogna. Should they be forced to evacuate the valley, they counted on the citadel of Pra del Torno in which to take refuge.

Pra del Torno was aptly described as “the devil’s stronghold against papist invasions.”<sup>1</sup> From the days when the Archdeacon of Cremona in the fifteenth century employed force to reduce the Protestants to submission, down to the period of history bearing on this work, it had proved impregnable to all attacks, and it became a recognised fact that to attempt to take Pra del Torno was lost time. Situated in the narrowest part of the valley, this fortress can only be reached by means of a track winding over and round huge boulders of rock overhanging the stony path looking over the precipices on the cataracts and torrents below. The sole entrance to the fort by means of a light bridge swung between two rocks across a yawning chasm—could be destroyed by a few strokes of a hammer, and thus invaders found themselves suddenly confronted by death on every side, as the mountaineers, in hot pursuit, made retreat well-nigh impossible.<sup>2</sup>

The attention of Catinat was specially directed to this traditionally impenetrable fortress. In order to secure the success that had been denied to so many of his predecessors under arms, he decided that both armies were to converge towards the valley of Angrogna, and he concentrated the French troops round Pinerolo, whilst the Piedmontese under Don Gabriel of Savoy were encamped at the foot of the Alps near the entrance to the valleys.

The village of San Germano in the valley of Luzern

<sup>1</sup> *Alle porte d’Italia*, p. 268.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 276.

was carried by the French, but not without the loss of nine officers and many men ; two hundred Waldenses then entrenched themselves near Pramolle, and after ten hours of desperate fighting, obliged the enemy to retire with heavy loss.

So far fortune had favoured the Waldenses, but Catinat, irritated that a handful of undrilled peasants should get the better of his troops, entered the valley of San Martino with the largest division of his army and there commenced to work serious havoc amongst the rebels, whilst the Piedmontese, by means of their artillery and cavalry charges, entirely swept the valley of Luzern and entered that of Angrogna. Here, for a whole day, five hundred armed peasants held their own against twice that number of disciplined troops, and only capitulated when they heard that their companions in the valley of San Martino had been scattered in all directions. This occurred on April 26th, and Catinat, fully convinced that the rebellion had been entirely repressed, wrote the following report to Louvois :—

“ The fortress of Pra del Torno, so long spoken of as impregnable, and all the valley of Angrogna, surrendered as soon as the King’s troops and those of H.R.H. were seen on the heights. The other valleys have also capitulated. Nothing remains to be done beyond compelling a small number of the most obstinate rebels in the upper part of the valley of Luzern to lay down their arms. H.R.H. will send a large detachment of his troops for this purpose, whilst

I shall march towards Prali above the valley of San Martino.”<sup>1</sup>

Catinat was too deeply engrossed in his own ambitions and the empty pride of adding fame to his name to be capable of grasping the resistance that the love of home and fatherland could produce in a simple people who, shorn of ambition, were whole-hearted in defence of their religion, their villages, and their rural lives ; and at the time when the General was sneering at the want of spirit shown by the Waldenses they were holding councils of war in caves and grottos to decide on the measures they should adopt against the enemy. The leaders recognised the mistake they had made in having attempted any methodical system of attack against disciplined troops, and, after long deliberation, by unanimous consent they agreed to resort to the guerilla warfare in which they excelled, and thus avenge the lives of those that had been taken. When, therefore, the French and Piedmontese troops scoured the valleys under Catinat’s directions, the surprise already felt on finding Angrogna deserted was still greater as each valley and village entered by the invaders presented the same desolate appearance.

After accounting for the comparatively small number of Waldenses killed and disabled in the first assaults, Catinat began to reflect that he had shown some error in his tactics, and had allowed his prey to

<sup>1</sup> *Histoire de Louvois*, vol. iv. p. 22.

escape to the mountains ; he therefore broke up his army into small detachments, provided them with grappling-hooks, and with strict injunctions that any armed peasant was to be hanged to the nearest tree and no quarter given, he ordered that every pass and defile should be searched.<sup>1</sup>

From this point the acute passages of history connected with the expedition against the Waldenses commenced and degenerated into a frightful massacre. Catinat's troops started to complete the task imposed on them, but the General had underrated the difficulties with which they were confronted. Over-weighted by their uniforms, unaccustomed in their military accoutrements to alpine climbing, the men stumbled, fell, slipped in their efforts to scramble over the rocks and through the dense underwood, every few yards of which was rendered still more inaccessible by formidable barricades ; they floundered through the torrents, lost their foothold on the large slippery boulders concealed under the foaming cataracts, and all this time armed peasants sprang out from behind each tree and turn, they swarmed round every corner, availing themselves of any arms that came to hand, hurled rocks and stones at the invaders' heads, and sent the lifeless and wounded bodies bounding over the cliffs into the yawning chasms below. Those pressing close behind the first detachment of troops, infuriated at the desperate stand made by the "barbets," followed in panting haste to replace

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24.

their fallen comrades, and as they fired volley after volley on the defenders of the mountains they gradually made a breach up to the Pra del Torno. Every inch of the way was disputed by a patriot fighting for his life, his all ; and whilst at close quarters the attacks assumed the ferocity of personal revenge, and amidst the dust, smoke, and cries of agony, as on the points of the bristling bayonets the French soldiers tossed the bodies of the Waldenses over the rocks and into the torrents, ever and anon the weeping and wailing of the women and children could be heard from some secret hiding-place, and the voice of the pastor, standing on the heights with uplifted hand in the act of benediction, rose clear and commanding as he recited verses from the psalms and, in the name of their faith, urged his children to victory.

During this time Victor Amadeus was administering justice in the valley of Luzern. The panic-stricken fugitives who had previously abandoned the valleys for the greater security of the mountains, now that the French troops had pursued them to their last place of refuge with such ferocity, had precipitated themselves back again amongst the ruins of their former homes.

Some Protestant historians affirm that they were encouraged to do so by the false promises of Catinat and Don Gabriel, who, in order to induce them to lay down their arms, promulgated edicts to guarantee that the Duke would accord the choice to them and their families of exile or abjuration of their faith.

The following letter from the Duke to Don Gabriel refers to his instructions on the subject, but bears no trace of a disposition to mercy ; the words run as follows :—

“MONSIEUR DON GABRIEL DE SAVOYE MY UNCLE,—  
As I have established a kind of magistracy in these valleys, I beg you to send me all the heretics you make prisoners instead of hanging them. I particularly request your attention to this order, as the first fire is over, and they will be tried here. This is the reason of my letter, and I beg to assure you, Monsieur Don Gabriel, my uncle, that I remain your respectful nephew, the Duke of Savoy, King of Cyprus.

“(Signed) V. AMÉDÉO.

“DE LUSERNE, *ce 15 Mai, 1686.*”<sup>1</sup>

Victor Amadeus was in no mood to show either pity or generosity with regard to the pitiable plight of his people. He felt at enmity with all the world. His rancour and hatred towards the French troops who were overrunning his country was all the more intense from the fact that he was powerless to prevent them, and the exasperation caused by his own weakness envenomed his soul, and vented itself in resentment against the Waldenses for the obstinacy they had displayed in opposition to all reasonable offers of a compromise. Many families, confident in the Duke's word, gave themselves up as prisoners, but as soon as they had been brought to Luzern they were

<sup>1</sup> State Archives, Turin.

separated from each other, and with merciless treatment were transported into the State.

Such of the wretched fugitives who still remained in the mountains were pitilessly tracked by the overwhelming numbers of the French military, against which heroism was unavailing. Those that resisted were killed, the wounded or infirm were barbarously handled, the aged and children were bayoneted, and the small number who managed to escape over the Alps found French troops on the other side, who sent back as prisoners to the Duke of Savoy those they did not kill.

By the commencement of June the whole country was depopulated, twelve thousand prisoners were sent to the different fortresses of Piedmont, and about two thousand children were taken from their parents and handed over to the charge of Catholics. Those who were anxious for Court favours and preferments adopted the expedient of proselytising to bring themselves into notice. It became the fashion amongst the principal families in Turin to adopt children for the purposes of conversion ; they were to be seen seated at the back of the carriages during the afternoon drive wearing caps of a peculiar shape, in order that they should attract attention.

The last cruel blows of the Waldensian persecution had been struck, ruins and devastation had replaced the little hamlets of the peaceful valleys, the troops had retired, and as a mournful silence succeeded to the imprecations and cries that had bitterly

rent the air, from the inner recesses of caves and crevasses, phantoms more typical of wild beasts than human beings slowly and cautiously left their lairs and counted over their numbers. These dishevelled, starved, almost unclothed remnants of the former trusty mountaineers, who for months past had lived on herbs and roots or on whatever came to their hands, were reduced to forty-two, besides a few women and children. They crawled down the steep paths into the silent plains, attacked any stray wayfarer, picked up such spoils and ammunition as chanced to be lying about, and returned with their booty to the mountains, from whence, after having clothed themselves and regained some of their lost strength, they again descended to plunder, murder, and to create terror. Impossible to arrest, for they defied all pursuit, the Government offered them a free pass out of the country ; to this proposal they claimed hostages, and the liberation of their relatives, as the conditions of their consent : this was granted them, and in November, 1686, they left the scene of carnage and turned their steps in the direction of Switzerland.<sup>1</sup>

Before the troops had disbanded Victor Amadeus showed Catinat special marks of his esteem. He dined at the General's table, and presented him with his portrait set in diamonds ; the Duke also offered handsome gifts to many of the officers as a souvenir of the expedition. Nothing could be more flattering

<sup>1</sup> Carutti, p. 89.

and courteous than the terms in which Victor Amadeus spoke to Catinat of Louis XIV. in the last interview they had together previous to the General's return to Casal on June 14th. These expressions of friendship for France were repeated, as the Duke intended they should be, to Louvois, and the Minister, without seeking to fathom the reasons that prompted these sudden amiable dispositions towards France, declared to Catinat that the Court of Versailles was highly satisfied at the terms in which the Duke showed his attachment for His Majesty.<sup>1</sup>

Victor Amadeus, on his return to Turin, found there were many important matters to regulate in consequence of the disastrous war. He had to consider the questions of repairing the harm he had done, and of repeopling the valleys ; he decided to encourage Catholic families to settle and colonise on the lands formerly belonging to the Waldenses, but it was a slow and difficult matter to bring to a conclusion.

Another problem that had to be solved without delay was that concerning the prisoners. The citadels of Turin, Asti, Mondovi, etc., were filled to overflowing, and through the crowding, bad food, and neglect, in the short space of four months out of nine hundred imprisoned in the Castle of Verrua, only one hundred and fifty were alive, and most of this diminished number were ill. D'Arcy reported to the King the horrors taking place in the prisons,

<sup>1</sup> *Histoire de Louvois*, vol. iv. p. 26.

but to the Ambassador's piteous description of the sufferings of the prisoners Louis XIV. cynically replied :—

“ It is very fortunate for the Duke of Savoy that illness is saving him a great deal of trouble with the rebels of the valleys, and I have no doubt he will easily console himself with the loss of subjects who can be replaced with others far more loyal and dependable.”<sup>1</sup>

Finally, as a means of relieving himself of a heavy charge, Victor Amadeus listened to the proposals of the Protestant Cantons of Switzerland, and agreed to liberate the prisoners and to send them as far as the Swiss frontier at his expense ; on reaching the frontier they would be handed over to the delegates who undertook to keep them and be responsible that they should not return to Savoy or stir up dissenting feeling.

In the month of December these miserable spectres of humanity were dragged out of their cold, damp cells. The sick, by far the greater proportion, were huddled together in carts to be jolted over the Mont Cenis pass in mid-winter, and, added to their sufferings from intense cold, they were not free from inhuman treatment on the part of the soldiers who accompanied them. Enfeebled by illness and privations, the most fortunate died at an early stage of their painful journey, and out of the twelve thousand Waldensians

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. iv. p. 28.

who had been chased from their homes, only about four thousand reached the frontier alive.

In recounting the barbarities relating to the prison life of these poor peasants, it is only justice to say that most of the cases of cruelty were absolutely unknown to Victor Amadeus. In a narrative written by a survivor, the prisoner says that they were forbidden to approach the grating of the cells on those occasions that the Duke visited the citadel of Turin to preside at councils, and if any attempt was noticed by which the prisoners sought to attract his attention, they were severely punished.

In bringing to a close the gruesome incidents attached to the persecution of the Waldenses, it is pleasant to be able to relate that Father Valfré, of the Order of S. Filippo Neri, who was beatified by Pope Gregory XVI., and another monk of the same Order, assumed the charitable office of distributing bread and medicines to those of the prisoners most in need, without distinction of creed. They were as assiduous in their acts of charity towards the Waldenses as to those of their own faith, many of whom, cheered by their words of comfort and touched by the priests' administration to their wants, murmured blessings on the saintly Fathers as they passed from their sufferings to the release of death.

Whilst Victor Amadeus was away on the expedition that cannot be added to the annals of his fame, the young Duchess had led a very retired life. It was supposed that she had received strict injunctions from

the Duke on the employment of her time during his absence, and even the company of her mother-in-law was interdicted her. Madame Royale wrote to her friend, Madame de la Fayette :—

“ H.R.H. lives in most extraordinary retirement, and we only meet at the promenade or when we go to visit churches together. Evidently she has been given very severe instructions, and she is so precise, and is so afraid, that nothing would induce her to take a step, nor say a word, without permission, and though she is dying of ennui she does not confide in me, and I make believe not to see it.”<sup>1</sup>

Madame Royale, though she and her daughter-in-law had but few interests in common, could not help feeling some slight affection for the young wife, even though she spoke in disparaging terms of her constancy and conscientiousness in carrying out all her husband’s wishes.

The harmony that reigned between the two Duchesses was in a great measure due to the deference shown by Anna to her mother-in-law. As far as possible she always gave Madame Royale precedence, and deferred to her opinion with unaffected courtesy. These attentions, though unimportant in themselves, were jealously prized by Madame Royale, and the modesty with which Anna accepted her mother-in-law’s position at Court secured her Madame Royale’s good graces.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

It was generally remarked that Victor Amadeus had returned to Turin singularly unelated at the result of his campaign, no rejoicings were held, and a heavy depression reigned over the Court.

His dejection increased as the excitement and agitation of the war gave way to calm retrospection: he was unable to banish from his mind the tragedies he had witnessed and the scenes in which he had taken part, the remorse that preyed on his conscience was still further increased at the thought that he had not been competent to overrule the decision of France, in whose designs he had been an ignominious factor.

The dejected, depressed mien of the Duke did not raise his wife's spirits. She had expected and hoped that his return would have thrown some life into the Court that during his absence had been anxious and sad; but Victor Amadeus' thoughts were too busily employed to allow him leisure to occupy himself with amusing his wife. Four years were to elapse before it would be known what during that time had been the subject of the Duke's profound meditations. The Waldensian war was a marked epoch in the career of Victor Amadeus; it excited his determination to shake himself free of the shackles of France, and it indirectly led to the events of 1690.

Asking no advice, keeper of his own counsels, reserving his energies for the moment ripe for the blow, the wonderful capacity for prescience and pre-cognition shown by this remarkable character is

concisely criticised in the following paragraph from St. Beuve :—

“No one more skilfully than he had attacked Louis XIV. in his weak point. It might be compared to the gnat infuriating the lion. The cunning and constant duplicity employed by the Duke would merit only detestation and blame, had not Louis XIV. drawn it entirely on himself by his abuse of power, and justified his weaker rival in paying back the proud and powerful monarch with all the ruse of which he was capable.”<sup>1</sup>

Soon after the Duke’s return it was seen that he had no intention of confining himself to meditations only, and on the evening of January 28th, 1687, as the guests were leaving the Duchess’s salon, where, according to custom, she had been holding her evening Court, Victor Amadeus drew the French Ambassador on one side and said he wished to tell him in confidence that he had decided to go to Venice to pass the Carnival there with his cousin, the Elector of Bavaria. D’Arcy was very much taken aback at this announcement, and began to use such remonstrances as he thought would prove efficacious, but he was interrupted by the Duke, who asked him whether he had received orders to oppose this voyage? The Ambassador replied that though he had not been given any instructions, he knew his master’s sentiments well enough to take upon himself to say that

<sup>1</sup> *Nouveaux Lundis*, tome 7, p. 78. St. Beuve.

it would be as displeasing now to Louis XIV. as it had been in 1684, when the Duke had been persuaded to give up his visit to Venice. Victor Amadeus then closed the interview, after having assured the Ambassador of the esteem and respect he felt for the King, but refused to give any reassurance as to altering his intentions, that, he said, were inspired solely for the sake of amusement, and had nothing whatever to do with politics.

Before starting on his journey, Victor Amadeus drew up an official document sealed by St. Thomas, in which he constituted his wife sole administrator of affairs during his absence. Nothing could have been more displeasing to Madame Royale than this proof of her son's confidence in Anna's judgment, and forgetful of the deference and respect always shown her by her daughter-in-law, she cast reflections on the Duchess, implying that she had influenced the Duke's decision in the matter. Many curious details on this and other subjects affecting the Court life at Turin are to be seen in a MS. in the King's Library at Turin, that apparently was written under the directions of Madame Royale herself, and at the expense of insinuations against others, is chiefly a panegyric of her own actions.<sup>1</sup> On the question relating to the appointment of a temporary Regency, reference is drawn to the custom observed at the Court of France to leave the direction of affairs in the Queen Mother's hands during the King's absence,

<sup>1</sup> *Memorie sulla vita di Madama Reale.*

rather than to the reigning Queen. The writer, referring to the incident, adds :—

“ Though Madame Royale thinks it right to hide what she feels in this matter, it is such a strange precedent that she cannot help suspecting that it has been done with a purpose.”

Madame Royale’s jealousy prevented her dropping the subject. She experienced a certain amount of spiteful satisfaction at being able to inflict some pain on the Duchess, and whilst Victor Amadeus, in order to allay the suspicions with which France viewed his journey, had sent a courier to his father-in-law in Paris to beg him to contradict any false interpretations on the matter, Madame Royale, whose statements carried more weight at the Court of Versailles than those of her son, spread the report that the Duke had no other reason for the journey save that of meeting one of her former maids of honour who now resided in Venice.

These plausible excuses, offered in explanation of the Duke’s hurried decision to absent himself from Turin, were received by Louis XIV. for what they were worth, but though he might protest, he was not at that moment in a position to impose by force that which he could not obtain by persuasion. The initiative taken by William of Orange had resulted in the powerful coalition of the Empire, Holland, and the Dukes of Lorraine and Bavaria against the encroachments being made by France. Venice without openly

declaring herself was known to favour them secretly, and hopes were entertained that Spain and Savoy would join in the general arming against France that had led to the Treaty of Augsburg, July 9th, 1686.

Under these circumstances it was unavoidable that Louis XIV. should not be otherwise than uneasy at signs of rebellion in a Prince who was so convenient a tool to further French interests ; but on this occasion, feeling his inability to prevent his voyage, he determined that at least a strict surveillance should be exercised over all his proceedings while at Venice, and as soon as it was assured that the Duke had left Turin on January 30th, d'Arcy received orders to follow him at once, to report on all that took place whilst Victor Amadeus was at Venice, and to do his best to hinder him from going elsewhere.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE CARNIVAL OF VENICE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

Victor Amadeus leaves for Venice—His incognito—Warm reception on the way—His arrival at Venice—Meeting between the Duke and the Elector of Bavaria—Festivities in their honour—The departure of the Elector and the Duke's precipitate return to Turin—d'Arcy reports to Louis XIV. on the occurrences at Venice—Prince Eugène of Savoy—The reasons for his abandonment of France—Annoyance of Louis XIV.—His preoccupation at the Duke's sedentary life—The King resents the Duke's tendency to emancipation—Remonstrances on his neglect of the Duchess—Disastrous effects of untimely interference—The Carnival at Turin—Arrival of the Contessa di Verrua.

THE following particulars bearing reference to the voyage of Victor Amadeus to Venice are gathered from an official document preserved in the State Archives at Turin, which give a minute statement of all the events that occurred on the road and during the Duke's residence in Venice. The extracts selected from the detailed report show that his presence at the Carnival of Venice in 1687 fully justified the apprehensions entertained by Louis XIV. on the possible results of the journey, while it confirmed the sanguine expectations of Victor Amadeus. In order to enjoy greater liberty, the Duke decided to take the name of Conte di Tenda, and under that title he assumed the

position of one of Conte Rovero's suite who was sent by the Duke of Savoy to Venice to present his compliments to the Elector of Bavaria.

This incognito having been agreed on in the hope of avoiding official receptions, the Duke left Turin January 30th, and passed the night at Vercelli ; the next day at dawn he proceeded to Novara. Here he was detained longer than he wished by finding himself compelled to wait for the arrival of the Conte di Fuensalida, Grandee of Spain and Governor of the Milanese States to His Most Catholic Majesty, who having received information of the Duke's departure from Turin, had hurriedly left for Novara to pay him homage, and to make sure that the Duke should not leave before his arrival, sent orders that the gates of the town were to be kept shut. It was a very wise precaution on the Count's part, as this delay was annoying to the Duke, and he tried to prevail on the local Governor of Novara to open the gates and to allow him to proceed on his way. Whilst these pourparlers were taking place Count Fuensalida arrived, the gates were immediately opened, and the Count, standing on the drawbridge, bowed to the Duke, and offered him every mark of profound respect. The Duke dismounted, and replied that though for the time being he was not H.R.H., yet he thanked the Count most cordially for his friendly address ; upon which Fuensalida knelt before H.R.H. and offered him the bâton of office, saying he handed over to H.R.H. the authority that was his, whether

as Conte di Tenda or any other name he might think right to assume. H.R.H., however, refused to accept the bâton, though he replied that it would always be his earnest wish to prove his attachment to His Most Catholic Majesty.

The Duke and the Conte di Fuensalida proceeded together to Buffalora, where dinner was served by the Count's cooks and servants, who had been sent on by him to prepare for H.R.H.; the rooms had also been furnished with tapestries and brocades in order to make the house more worthy of the reception of such a great personage.

The Duke, however, was much too eager to get to his journey's end and only stayed a short time at Buffalora, proceeding as fast as he could to Milan, where he took up his residence at the house of his Minister in residence, il Conte Porro.

The Conte di Fuensalida followed an hour later and again offered the bâton to H.R.H. Upon the Duke refusing it a second time, the Count left it in charge of Count Porro, and told him that as long as a guest of such distinction was under his roof, the bâton must remain in his palace.

After the Duke had driven out with his Minister to visit the castle and other parts of the town, towards evening he went to pay his respects to the Contessa di Fuensalida.

At a later hour H.R.H. assisted at a theatrical performance that took place in the Governor's palace and occupied a seat next the Marchesa Visconti, who

was formerly maid of honour to Madame Royale. At the close of the opera, the Governor begged H.R.H. to remain for the ball, at which there was a large gathering of ladies and gentlemen in expectation of seeing the royal guest, in whose honour the festivities were held.

The next morning many of the nobility were presented to the Duke. He could not fail to be gratified at their expressions of sincere affection for the House of Savoy, and those who had the honour of being received by him were greatly impressed by the affability, intelligence, and the gracious manners of H.R.H.

The Duke remained in Milan the whole of the next day, and employed his time in visiting the most interesting parts of the town. Before his departure on February 3rd the Conte di Fuensalida presented him with a Polish cloak (*chiamberluck*) in scarlet trimmed with gold and lined with priceless sable.

The Duke then left for Brescia, Verona, and Padua. At Padua he was met by Prince Eugène of Savoy, who was staying in Venice with the Elector of Bavaria. The Prince had been told of the Duke's expected arrival, and went with all speed to meet his cousin. H.R.H. visited the church at Padua containing the well-known relics of the Saint, and then drove as far as Fusine, where he got into a boat and, at one in the morning, he reached the Palazzo Carara on the Grand Canal, that had been put at his disposal.

The next day the Conte Rovero, who represented

the Duke, sent to inquire at what hour he could be received by H.S.H. the Elector of Bavaria. In answer to this inquiry, H.S.H., knowing that his royal cousin of Savoy, of whose fame he had heard so much, had arrived, instead of allowing the Duke's envoy to be the first to pay his respects, went at once to the palace, where he was met by the Duke at the foot of the stairs, and after embracing each other repeatedly the two Princes retired to H.R.H.'s apartments, where they remained for a long time in private conversation. At the close of their interview, the Elector presented his suite, who went down on their knees before H.R.H. After dinner the Duke returned the Elector's visit, observing the same formalities as had been shown to himself, and went to the palazzo in which the Elector resided, situated also on the Grand Canal.

From that day the two Princes, under the names of the Conte di Tenda and the Conte di Tacco, were inseparable. They took part together at all the comedies, balls, and other entertainments, and, as was often the custom during the Carnival at Venice, they frequently wore masks.

The two Princes paid no attention to the question of precedence, and it happened more than once that their suite instead of themselves were given the seats of honour. These matters affected them so little that at the last evening of carnival, at a supper offered them by the Abbé Grimani after a representation in his theatre of San Giovanni Crisostomo, both the

Princes honoured the guests by shaking hands with each in turn.

The Duke of Savoy waited till the commencement of Lent, when all the masquerades were over and masks were no longer worn, to inform the ministers of the Republic of his arrival in Venice, under the name of Conte di Tenda. On the reception of this announcement, the Senate met in order to consult as to what was the proper reception to accord H.R.H. It was unanimously decided to offer him the same attentions as had been paid to the Elector of Bavaria, to whom the Doge had sent magnificent presents, and had delegated four gentlemen of the Venetian nobility to be in constant attendance on H.S.H. as long as he was a guest of the Republic.

H.R.H. continued to visit the sights of Venice, accompanied by the four noblemen. He went to the Lido and saw all the troops under arms. At the Port of Malamocco he was offered a sumptuous dinner, during which time salvos of artillery were fired in his honour; he also visited the treasures in S. Marco, the Council Chamber, the Arsenal, and everything most worthy of note in the city. He assisted at the wrestling between the Nicolotti and the Castellani on the bridge of Sta. Barnaba. A special permission was granted for this spectacle, which, as a rule, only takes place on occasions of great solemnity.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Castellani and Nicolotti were rival factions in the days of the Venetian Republic, and lived in the parishes of Castello and S. Niccolo, divided by the Grand Canal. The origin of the disputes

The Duke and the Elector of Bavaria also took part in a regatta organised in his honour, but all these festivities were brought to a close by the Elector, who, receiving news that the Electress was slightly indisposed, at once made preparations for his departure. After presenting the Conte Rovero with a diamond ring as recognition of his position as Envoy to H.R.H., he left Venice, attended by the four noblemen who had orders to accompany him as far as Fusine.

The Princes had taken an affectionate farewell of each other, but the Duke, wishing to give his cousin an agreeable surprise, shortly after the Elector's departure from Venice engaged an extra number of gondoliers and bade them row with all speed to Fusine, so as to arrive before the Elector had left. Here the two Princes repeated their farewells and gave renewed proofs that they were bound by a sentiment of friendship as much as by ties of blood.

After the Elector's departure the nobility of Venice, desiring to do everything to please H.R.H., gave

of the two parties is difficult to trace. Some attribute it to differences that arose regarding the rights of fishing and shooting at a time when the islands were not united in one city and there were no limits of property. It is also suggested that the aggressive feeling between the factions was spread by the inhabitants of Aquileia and Heracleia, who came to Venice and established themselves on either side of the Grand Canal and fomented the feud already raging between the Castellani and Nicolotti. Up to a recent date the wrestling and boxing between the two parties was one of the principal amusements at Venice of Jeudi Gras (*Origine delle Feste Veneziane*, G. Michiel. Milano, 1829).

a large reception, at which ladies were invited, and on the last day of the Duke's visit a magnificent entertainment was offered him in the Arsenal, where he had an opportunity of admiring the powerful means of defence at the disposal of the Republic.

The Duke cannot have failed to observe the sentiment he inspired wherever he went. His remarkable qualities attracted general attention, and the unanimous opinion was that he combined unusual dignity and prudence with great vivacity and intelligence. He was spoken of in the Venetian Republic as "an ideal Prince and one worthy of great admiration."

It only remains to add that a few days after H.R.H. arrived in Venice he was followed by the Marchese d'Arcy, His Most Christian Majesty's Ambassador to the Court of Turin, who explained his presence in that city under pretext of wishing to show Venice to a French gentleman ; but one thing is certain, that he never lost sight of H.R.H. for a single moment.

When the Duke left Venice he was half inclined to stop at Bologna, where he had received pressing invitations ; he also deliberated whether he would visit the Dukes of Parma and of Modena, but he ultimately decided to return by the same route as he had taken on his arrival. He left Venice on the 4th March, and so quickly did he accomplish the journey that he was only a day and a half on the road between Venice and Milan. The same evening that he arrived in Milan he visited the Certosa of Pavia,



VITTORIO AMEDEO II., DUCA DI SAVOIA, 1º RE DI SARDEGNA. NATO IN  
TORINO IL 14 MAGGIO 1666, MORTO A MONCALIERI IL 31 OTTOBRE 1732  
*By gracious permission of H.M. Queen Margherita*

VICTOR AMADEUS II., FIRST KING OF SICILY AND SARDINIA  
*From the picture in the Palazzo Regina Margherita, Rome*



from thence he went to Alessandria and Asti, to his home in Turin.<sup>1</sup>

There is a letter from the Papal Nunzio announcing the Duke's return. He wrote that H.R.H. had anticipated his arrival by one day, much to the joy of the Duchess, who gladly resigned the absolute authority that had been left in her hands for the greater satisfaction of having her consort home again. The Nunzio went on to state that the Duke appeared to have returned in excellent health, his face was quite tanned with the sun and wind, and that H.R.H. was much complimented on the reception given him wherever he had been, and the generosity and courtesy he showed to everyone was highly commended.<sup>2</sup>

No one had been less prepared for the Duke's precipitate return than d'Arcy, who, notwithstanding the close supervision he held over Victor Amadeus, was incapable of following his fluctuating decisions and the rapidity with which he acted on them. Though the Ambassador did his utmost not to lose sight of the Duke, he found it impossible to keep up with him, and only reached Turin three days later than the Prince he was pursuing.

The Ambassador, who continued to send Louis XIV. his detailed chronicle on what had taken place during

<sup>1</sup> "Relatione succinta del viaggio in Italia fatto nell' Anno 1687 del Glorioissimo Vittorio Amedeo Duca di Savoia Principe di Piemonte, Re di Cipro." *Categoria Real Casa*, Mazzo 3°, No. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Nunzio's letters, Vatican Archives, folio 106.

the past few weeks, had to give some explanation at this hurried return, and said it was a sudden freak on the part of Victor Amadeus, and all the more strange, as only a day previous to his departure from Venice he had mentioned to the Ambassador the wish he had always felt to visit Rome and Naples, and seemed half decided to go to both towns before he returned to Turin. The Ambassador had tried to dissuade the Duke from prolonging his absence, and suggested that what he had said might partly account for the change of plans, though the unnecessarily rapid return was certainly somewhat singular.

Amongst the many thousand strangers who had flocked to Venice on the arrival of the Princes, d'Arcy had at first failed to notice the presence of Prince Eugène of Savoy, but in a later despatch the Ambassador reported that the Prince had come from Vienna expressly to see his cousin. The Ambassador proceeded to state that it had given him great pleasure to hear from the Duke that the amusements and fêtes at Venice did not at all come up to what he imagined they would be, and from his own personal observations, d'Arcy said he was persuaded that the Duke had only insisted on that journey from a spirit of opposition and independence, for, as regarded the meetings between H.R.H. and the Elector, they had always taken place in public, and the few times they had dined together they appeared to have done so more from civility than inclination. The only occasion noticed by the Ambassador when the Duke

apparently had some communication to make to the Elector was after H.S. Highness's departure, when he had hastily jumped into his gondola, and bidding the gondoliers row with all speed, he caught up the Elector at Fusine and dined with him on board his gondola.

Though d'Arcy hoped by these despatches to allay the King's fears, Louis XIV. did not feel the reassurance indulged in by d'Arcy himself. The subtleties employed by the King of France in his own political stratagems specially qualified him to penetrate the motives of others. For some time past Victor Amadeus had raised in the King's mind a feeling of doubt and unreliability as to his veracity. Louis XIV. therefore brooded over the possible results of the expedition to Venice, and the meeting between Victor Amadeus and the Elector of Bavaria.

The King showed special annoyance that Prince Eugène of Savoy should have been at Venice to receive his cousin, and this incident was another reason for his misgivings.

Ever since Prince Eugène had enlisted in the Austrian army Louis XIV. had borne him a grudge, and though to disinterested lookers-on it appeared natural that the two Princes should have availed themselves of this opportunity of meeting, the King was greatly disturbed that it should have occurred.

This resentment felt by the King against the Prince was all the stronger, as he was alone responsible for Prince Eugène's abandonment of his country, and the

irritation on his own error of judgment increased his aversion towards him.

Born at Paris in 1663, Prince Eugène was ten years of age at the death of his father Eugène Maurice, Comte de Soissons, who had married the beautiful Olimpia Mancini, niece of Cardinal Mazarin. Prince Eugène was the youngest of five sons. The beauty and the fascinations of their mother had engaged the passing attentions of Louis XIV. previous to his more durable affection for Louise de la Vallière. The Comtesse de Soissons, used to adulation and flattery, had been deeply mortified on finding she had not enrolled the King as one of her slaves, and could not accept with equanimity the transference of royal favour to a rival. Her jealousy became so bitter that, losing all self-control, she commenced writing scandalous libels against Louise de la Vallière. It was even whispered that her hatred had not stopped here, and many disagreeable stories were circulated against the Comtesse bearing reference to her acquaintance with La Voisin, who had been committed to prison under accusations of poisoning. These rumours concerning the Comtesse de Soissons, a lady of so high a rank, was the principal subject for discussion in society, and Louis XIV., in order to put a stop to gossip in which his own name was unpleasantly connected, requested her to leave Paris and retire to Brussels, where, on a later occasion, she was implicated in far more serious charges, to which reference will be made in succeeding pages.

Prince Eugène and his brother remained in Paris under the care of their father's relations. An ecclesiastical career had been decided on for Prince Eugène, but while he was busy studying, preparatory to entering the Church, his mind was far away from the theological dogmas with which he was wearied by his professors, and though his reserved, quiet manners and delicate appearance seemed to indicate the fitness of the vocation chosen for him, he took the decision into his own hands, threw off his clerical garments, resumed his former title of Chevalier de Carignan, and requested Louis XIV. to give him a command in the French army. This proposal on the part of "the little Abbé," the name by which he had been always known at Versailles, was refused by the King, who saw nothing in Prince Eugène's appearance or disposition to justify the young man's wish to be considered in the light of a warrior. His request was, therefore, treated as a joke and dismissed without further thought. Much disgusted by the refusal, and deeply mortified at the contemptuous way in which his offer of services should have been received, Prince Eugène left for Vienna, where he met with greater success, and he was given the rank of colonel and sent to Hungary to join his elder brother, then engaged in fighting under the Duke of Lorraine against the Turks.

At the time that he left Paris, somewhat disconcerted at the lack of encouragement shown him in support of his aspirations, Prince Eugène wrote to

his cousin in Turin to announce his intentions of following a military career.

He felt a great wish to secure the approbation of some members of his family on the step he had taken, and he considered that among all his cousins the Duke of Savoy would be the one most likely to encourage him in his new vocation ; nor had he any reason to regret the impulse that had prompted him to enlist the favour of Victor Amadeus. The Duke was not only greatly interested in Prince Eugène's bold decision, but was also specially gratified that his services should have been accepted in the Austrian army.

Always guided by the prevailing thought that the day would come when France would be compelled to recognise the strength of Savoy, the Duke took note of the smallest incidents that might indirectly lead to liberating him from dependence on a country that was becoming daily more odious to him, and in the following terms of responsive encouragement showed his pleasure that his cousin should be serving a country on whose future assistance as an ally his looks were directed. The letter to Prince Eugène ran as follows :—

“ **MY DEAR COUSIN**,—I consider the courtesy you have shown me in letting me know of your departure for the army a mark of your affection to which I hold. I earnestly hope you will find the fame you seek with such noble ardour, and that you will be rewarded by the happiness you merit. Assure your-

self that nothing can befall you without my being sensibly interested in it.

“With all imaginable passion I remain,

“Monsieur my cousin,

“Your very affect<sup>e</sup> Cousin,

“V. AMÉDÉO.

“From the VALENTINO, 15<sup>th</sup> July, 1684.”<sup>1</sup>

Two years after Prince Eugène had left France, when the echo of the name he was making for himself came to the ears of the Court of Versailles, he received an intimation that his country claimed his services, but to this tardy recognition of his capabilities he refused to respond, and contented himself with writing that the day would come when the King of France would know whose sword he had despised. This letter produced great amusement amongst Louis XIV. and his ministers, and all joined in the laughter raised by the King, who, after reading it aloud, sarcastically added, “It appears that we ought to consider the loss of the Prince as a great blow for our army.”

It had been a fortunate decision of Prince Eugène to cut himself adrift from the intrigues that entrammelled his country, by which so many careers, military and otherwise, were compromised ; and out of reach of jealousies and envy, he steadily made his way. His courage and knowledge of military tactics gained him the special favour of the Duke of Lorraine, and

<sup>1</sup> States Archives, Turin.

consequently the esteem of the Emperor Leopold I., who considered it of great importance to retain in his service so capable an officer, one also who, by his relationship to the Duke of Savoy, would be an available factor in negotiating affairs, when the time came, between the Court of Vienna and that of Savoy. Therefore, when Louis XIV. was informed that Prince Eugène had hastened to Venice to meet the Duke of Savoy, it was not to be wondered at that his suspicions were roused; and in order to enable the Court of Versailles to counteract the maturing of any events detrimental to the policy pursued by France, d'Arcy was strongly urged to take note of all that occurred at the Court of Turin, and to inform the French ministers, should any incident arise that might be connected with the recent voyage to Venice.

After the first few days subsequent to the Duke's return to Turin a change in his habits was generally observed. It was noticed that he gave up all his hunting expeditions, and the chief part of his day was passed in his study looking through State papers, reducing the charges in his household, and even those in military appointments.

All the Court amusements ceased, and everyone seemed affected by a general feeling of gloom and depression. Even the little card-parties, given by the Duchess, and the small dances that she thoroughly enjoyed, came to an end, and the only distractions left to her were of a most serious description, such

as those she had had recourse to during her husband's absence, when to "listen to a sermon preached by the preacher of San Domenico on the SS. Sindone, or hear the Miserere sung by the Court choir in the Cathedral," was the only break in the monotonous routine of her life.<sup>1</sup>

Neither complaint nor surprise passed the Duchess's lips at all these unexplained vagaries of the Duke's mode of conducting himself. Without a murmur she accepted the keen sense of disappointment, that increased the more she became convinced that her deep attachment for Victor Amadeus was unreciprocated; and though often chilled by his brusque manners, she appeared to ignore the curt way with which he addressed her, and invariably met his frowns with smiles.

But if the Duchess accepted with dignity and forbearance the secluded life imposed on her by her husband, Louis XIV. did not consider himself obliged to exercise the same amount of patience; and while expressing satisfaction at the economy being shown by Victor Amadeus in his administration, and admiration on the studious life that absorbed every moment he had at liberty from State affairs, the King was not without misgivings as to what might be the motives that led a young man of twenty-one thus to eschew society and estrange himself from everyone.

Louis XIV. felt the necessity to communicate to his Ambassador his uneasiness at his inability to fathom

<sup>1</sup> *Nunzio's Letters, Vatican Archives.*

the reason that prompted the Duke's wish for privacy, and he wrote to D'Arcy, May 15th, 1687 :—

“Your letter of the 3rd shows me that the Duke has a disposition to lead a solitary life quite unsuitable either to his age or to his position as Sovereign Prince. I have no doubt that a longer experience will teach him that in order to enjoy absolute authority it is necessary not only to show confidence towards those who consider it an honour to carry out a Sovereign's orders, but a Prince who desires to be loved and obeyed by his subjects must be constantly seen by them in public.”<sup>1</sup>

Having in these few words expressed his opinion on the line of life taken up by the Duke, in which the King's personal curiosity was disguised under a plea of casual advice offered to a Prince so much younger than himself, Louis XIV. looked round to see if he could discover other symptoms that would serve to betray the Duke's future intentions, and enable France to be put in possession of facts that might be of great importance for the policy it would be advisable to pursue with Savoy.

The King was not long to observe many trifling incidents which denoted an increased intimacy between the Duke and the Court of Vienna. Amongst others it was reported that Victor Amadeus was in negotiation with Austria concerning certain imperial fiefs lying between Nice, Savona, and Mondovi, that

<sup>1</sup> d'Arcy au Roi, *Histoire de Louvois*, vol. iv. p. 42.

had belonged to the empire ever since the days of the Guelphs and the Ghibellines. They were a constant source of embarrassment to Piedmont without being of advantage to the Imperial Court. It was a matter that had often occupied other Dukes of Savoy, and Victor Amadeus hoped to come to an understanding with the Emperor, and to obtain his renunciation of the suzerainty.

It was also said that the Duke was in constant communication with Prince Eugène, to whom he had assigned a revenue, and remarks were further made on the Duke's announcement that he intended to send a representative of the Court of Savoy to Spain.

All these rumours collected by d'Arcy relating to the Duke were immediately reported to the Court of Versailles, and fostered the King's apprehensions that the Duke was meditating some scheme that might be of serious consequence to France.

To these previous reports d'Arcy added a further anxiety by informing his Court that the Marquis de Parella was in readiness to start for Vienna should the Duchess, whose confinement was daily expected, give birth to a son.

The Marquis de Parella, who had led a retired life at Ferrara after his release from prison, to which he had been consigned by order of Madame Royale for trying to overthrow her government, was a special object of distrust to France. The antipathy felt for Parella by the French Government was reciprocal, and

he made no attempt to hide either his undisguised sympathy for Spain, or the favour he enjoyed at Vienna, where a relation of his held a post in the Ministry. The unexpected return of Parella to Turin, and his frequent interviews with the Duke, combined with the other circumstances previously mentioned, were freely commented on by the Ambassador, and confirmed Louis XIV. in his decision it was time to remind Victor Amadeus that there must be a limit to his emancipation from the Court of France. The Ambassador therefore received instructions to convey to the Duke expressions of the King's surprise and displeasure that his advice should not have been asked on all the recent negotiations, and to inform H.R.H. how important it was for his own interests that he should not give His Majesty so many reasons for distrust; and in the same instructions special reference was made to Parella's mission to the Court of Vienna, and d'Arcy was told to oppose it with every means in his power.<sup>1</sup>

Whilst these numerous complaints raised by Louis XIV. against the Duke of Savoy were being communicated by the Ambassador to the Marquis de St. Thomas, a great disappointment spread through Turin as, contrary to the hopes of the people, the Duchess gave birth to a second daughter on the 15th August.

All the preparations and political calculations had

<sup>1</sup> Le Roi à d'Arcy, 28 Août, 1687, *Histoire de Louvois*, vol. iv. p. 46.

been based on the certainty that an heir to the dukedom would be born, and the birth of another Princess was received without any enthusiasm either on the part of the Duke or his subjects. In consequence of this *contretemps* Parella was not sent to Vienna, and the question of the fiefs was again left in abeyance.

No effort was made on the part of Victor Amadeus to conceal from the Duchess his annoyance at the sudden suspension of his plans, and he became so inconsiderate in his conduct towards her that it afforded another opportunity for the King's interference. For some time previous to this last unfortunate event, which led to a further estrangement between the Duke and his wife, numerous reports charging Victor Amadeus with neglect and infidelity towards the Duchess had been brought to the notice of her father. Though these rumours were exaggerated, they gained credence with Monsieur ; he expressed dissatisfaction at the treatment to which the Duke was reported to subject his wife, and appealing to Louis XIV., he persuaded his brother that it was his duty to remind Victor Amadeus of the respect he owed to a Princess of France.

The intrusion of Louis XIV. into the domestic life of the Duke and Duchess was a most unfortunate move, and was largely responsible for the saddest moments of Anna d'Orléans' life.

Exasperated at the incessant fault-finding of his wife's relatives, Victor Amadeus was determined to

show that on certain matters he did not admit being dictated to, and rushing from one extreme to another, he emerged from the seclusion that had been productive of so much surmise and prying inquisitiveness, threw economy to the winds, and opened the Carnival of 1688 that for long after was spoken of as the most brilliant that had ever been seen at the Court of Turin.

The heavy expenditure entailed by the large scale on which Victor Amadeus commenced to entertain was so opposed to his habits of strict economy that it raised general comments of surprise ; but in the midst of this reckless impulse he opportunely recalled to mind that the sum of 100,000 crowns, being part of the Duchess's marriage dowry, was still due from France. He availed himself of this opportunity to draw attention to his claim, and courteously requested Louis XIV. that it might be attended to without delay.<sup>1</sup> The Duchess, for whose sake the remonstrances of the Court of France had ostensibly been raised, was the only person who not only gathered no consolation in this sudden change in the Duke's habits, but suffered the most from her father's ill-advised interference.

Under these auspices of unusual animation, Victor Amadeus plunged into the vortex of dissipations he had initiated. He entirely abandoned his hitherto sedentary habits, shook himself free from all restraint, and as if moved by a desire to show his absolute

<sup>1</sup> d'Arcy au Roi, January 10th, 1688.

independence, he paid his court indiscriminately to all the handsomest ladies who frequented his receptions.

The King and Monsieur were somewhat mortified that their remonstrances had led to a result so totally different to that which they had contemplated ; and whilst Monsieur continued to adopt the tone of an indignant father, the King saw renewed reason for alarm in this new trait of insubordination on the Duke's part. The pendulum, however, had been started ; it was in full swing, and as long as the Duke's attentions to ladies were reported to be promiscuous and variable, Louis XIV. wisely decided to refrain from observations that might still further imperil the situation.

It was not long, however, before this period of comparatively harmless enjoyment gave place to a phase of marked attentions to a lady who was destined to be mistress of the Duke's fate for many years to come, and who obtained a despotic hold on a man who had always been credited with far too great perspicacity ever to allow himself to be the slave of any serious attachment. In the future, no one more than Victor Amadeus had reason to regret the day when he abandoned the cold, calculating demeanour he generally adopted with women, and if the consequent events of that day caused bitter tears to his wife, it proved to be almost more deleterious to the Duke himself.

The lady who thus captivated his senses by her

fascinations, and through her intelligence influenced his decisions, was Jeanne-Baptiste d'Albert de Luynes, the daughter of Louis Charles, Duc de Luynes, one of the oldest and most esteemed of the nobility at the Court of Louis XIV. Jeanne-Baptiste was born in Paris in 1670, and from an early age gave signs of possessing both the beauty and intelligence that were to prove of so irresistible an attraction as to disarm a Prince whose reputation was founded on the prudence and reserve that dictated all his actions.

As the years passed, and his child approached a marriageable age, the Duc de Luynes looked round in search of a suitable husband for Jeanne-Baptiste ; the question of providing dowries for five daughters was one that required consideration, for though the de Luynes were of noble lineage, their wealth did not correspond to their social position.

Jeanne-Baptiste had not long to wait for a suitor, and at the age of thirteen she was affianced to the Conte di Verrua, a young Piedmontese nobleman connected with the equally well-known family of Scaglia. From the days of the Crusades the name of Verrua had had its place in history, and on every occasion the important posts confided to them in different epochs had always been honourably filled. Victor Amadeus made no opposition to the marriage of the Conte di Verrua with Mademoiselle de Luynes, the authorisation for which had been solicited by the Count's mother, who was lady-in-waiting to Madame Royale. She had always enjoyed great favour at

Court, and in the letter addressed to the Duc de Luynes in reference to the marriage of her son, she expressed great satisfaction on this alliance with a member of one of the greatest families in France.

The ceremony took place in August, 1683. Not very long after, the newly married couple left for Italy at the Duke's bidding, who claimed the Count's services, and early in October the *Gazette de France* notified that "the Comte de Verrue had arrived in Turin with his wife, the daughter of the Duc de Luynes."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *La Comtesse de Verrue*, p. 5, G. de Léris.

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